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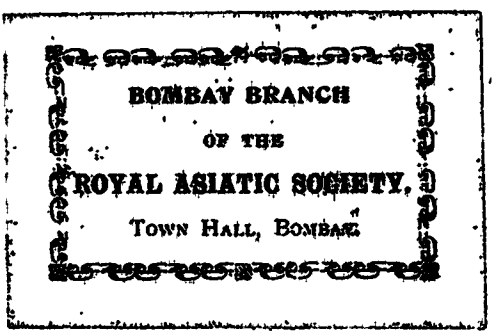

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OBSERVATIONS

ON

ITALY.

BY THE LATE

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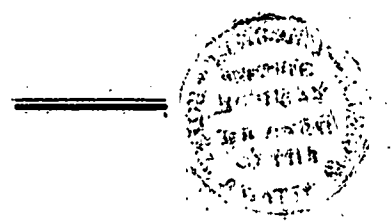
JOHN BELL,

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS, EDINBURGH, &C.



WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH: AND
T. CADELL, STRAND, LONDON.
M.D.CCC.XXV.

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TO

THE KING,

THIS VOLUME

IS,

WITH HIS MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION,

HUMBLY AND GRATEFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

HIS MAJESTY'S DEVOTED SUBJECT AND SERVANT,

ROSINE A. BELL.

INTRODUCTION.

THE following sheets are offered to the Public with that anxiety of mind which must naturally arise from the peculiar situation of the individual, on whom the mournful task has devolved of arranging for the press the productions of one who is no more; an anxiety which, on the present occasion, instead of being lessened, is, perhaps, rendered only more acute, from the known high talents of the author.

But, though the responsibility on this account be proportionally greater, yet, it may be hoped that his distinguished abilities will give some weight to his observations, even on subjects foreign to that line of science on which his celebrity is founded; and the unfinished state in which the manuscript was left at his decease, may perhaps be allowed to plead for that indulgence which might otherwise have been denied, or might not have been required.

These notes were not originally intended for the press.

From Mr Bell's scientific habits, he was in the practice of daily committing his observations to paper; and succeeding circumstances alone led him to form the project, if strength were spared to him, of arranging them, at a future period, for publication. He was induced to visit Italy, in the hope of recovering some portion of lost health; and he left Paris, in a state of debility which excited interest even in strangers, who knew him only by reputation. He was aware of his own situation; but a singular degree of spirit, and ardour of character, prevented his ever betraying any consciousness of it. The medical friend who attended him in Rome during his last illness, and to whose skill and tenderness the warmest tribute of gratitude is due, as well as to the Roman physicians, was much struck with these peculiar features in his character.

A few pencilled lines, written by himself, in a blank leaf, before leaving Paris, show that he was well acquainted with his danger. This leaf was partly torn, and the lines nearly effaced; but the concluding expressions were as follows:—"I have seen much of the disappointments of life. I shall not feel them long. Sickness, in an awful and sudden form; loss of blood, in which

I lay sinking for many hours, with the feeling of death long protracted, when I felt how painful it was not to come quite to life, yet not to die, a clamorous dream! tell that in no long time that must happen, which was lately so near." Neither reason nor conviction totally destroys hope; while it is a duty to adopt the most probable means of recovering health, however unlikely to succeed; and with this view he entered Italy.

To a classical taste, and knowledge of drawing, (many of his professional designs being finely executed by his own hand,) the author joined a mind strongly alive to the beauties of nature. He would often, in his earlier years, yield to the enjoyment they produced, and, wandering among the wild and grand scenery of his native land, indulge his imagination in gazing on the rapid stream, or watching the coming storm.

Such habits seem to have tended, in some measure, to form his character; training him especially to independence in judgment, and perseverance in investigation, that led him to seek knowledge, and boldly publish his opinions. With warm affections, and sanguine temper, he still looked forward with the hope that his labours and reputation would one day assuredly bring independ-

ence; and, meanwhile, listening only to the dictates of an enthusiastic nature, and yielding to the impulse of feeling, he would readily give his last guinea, his time and his care, to any who required them. Judging of others by himself, he was too confiding in friendship, and too careless in matters of business; consequently, from the one he was exposed to disappointment; and from the other involved in difficulties and embarrassments which tinged the colour of his whole life.

On his arrival in Florence, he visited her far-famed gallery with that ardour of spirit which a subject of such interest naturally inspired:—Here he regularly and daily found himself surrounded by strangers, who with a flattering distinction, sought information from him, as from the first anatomist of the day. His correct knowledge of the human form giving the accuracy of science to his criticisms, they were valued as such by his countrymen, who seemed to expect, as a matter of course, that he would publish his remarks; insomuch, that several letters were written to England, proclaiming that he was engaged in the composition of a voluminous work, before he had even formed the intention of proceeding beyond the improvement of his own taste and ideas. From

the scientific at Florence, and subsequently from the great and distinguished artists at Rome, he received the most flattering attention. He was in habits of intimacy with Thorwaldsen; and after his death, Canova expressed, in the most flattering manner, his sympathy in the fate of one who was so great a lover of the arts. He had by degrees adopted the view of writing for the press; but engaged in professional duties, and struggling under the sufferings of ill health, his designs were constantly impeded. His notes were almost wholly written in pencil, and generally taken down at the moment, as he sat at the foot of a statue, on a stair, or on the height of a tower, from whence he contemplated the face of nature.

He had hoped to live to arrange these Notes, and to write a little Treatise on the Moorish and German architecture; but frequent and severe attacks of illness, brought on embarrassments that depressed his mind. Disappointments of another nature increased his sorrows, and at last bore down a sinking frame.

The state of his health prevented his being able to attend his professional duties at an early hour. The day was in consequence generally far spent, ere he could find

leisure to engage in his favourite pursuits, and write those remarks which he trusted that some more quiet moment would yet permit him to complete and arrange.

The author's journey forms the most connected portion of his Notes, as he daily committed his observations to paper. Criticisms on the arts, slight historical memoranda arising from associations, and the recollections which his well-stored memory presented on visiting the scenes of which he had read, compose the desultory subjects of the sketches, which are now presented in their original state. The author, during his residence abroad, had many opportunities of judging of the difficulties encountered by young travellers in forming their taste and opinions. Guide-books and Custodi, generally adopting but one language, describe every object as exquisite; he hoped, therefore, that some few observations, founded on principle, and pointing out the subjects most worthy of notice, might render his work not only useful as a book of reference to the unexperienced, but also prove the means of shortening the labours of the amateur, whose leisure did not admit of long investigation. These considerations, combined with the object of giving speci-

mens of the author's various studies, will, the editor hopes, offer a sufficient apology for this publication; nor will the feeling reader be unwilling to remember the melancholy circumstances under which they were written, by one suffering from the approaches of a fatal disorder, —whose life has been devoted to severe studies,—and whose discoveries and useful labours have formed an epoch in his profession. These recollections may so influence his mind as to lead him to trace in these sketches, the promise of what they would have been, had the author survived to prepare them for the press.

Circumstances have painfully conspired to delay the publication of this work to the present period. The Manuscripts were, in the first instance, committed to the care of one who was peculiarly fitted for the task; but occupations of a high and important nature, obliged him, after a period of eighteen months, entirely to relinquish the attempt. A farther interruption arose from the long declining health of the editor in whose hands they were then placed. The nature of this work, perhaps, renders these delays of small importance, as criticisms on the fine arts, and views of scenery, can be little affected by

it; and perhaps to the speculative reader, the local changes which have occurred, whether in cities, manners, or customs, may present additional proofs of the constant vicissitude of all worldly concerns.

OBSERVATIONS ON ITALY.

CHAPTER FIRST.

APPROACH TO LYONS—LYONS—MOSAIC PAVEMENT.

We began our journey into Italy in the beginning of June 1817, and left Paris on our way to Fontainebleau. It was a beautiful morning. The air had been rendered peculiarly mellow and refreshing by a severe storm the preceding evening; and a bright sunshine cheered us on our way, shedding its pleasing influence on the mind, and dispelling that undefined dejection of spirit, which with such powerful influence affects us at the outset of a long journey. Even in the brilliant hour of youthful hope, and gay anticipation, such a moment is not un-

clouded by some mixture of pain; the mind insensibly revolves the days that are past, and looks forward with a feeling of anxiety to those which are yet to come; but the spirit soon finds relief in the pleasing images, and the new stores of knowledge presented in travelling.

The road from Paris by Fontainebleau to Lyons has been so often described, that I shall state only the general features of the country to be such, as to render the epithet of "fair and fertile France" well applied. The North and South of France are very different in appearance. The first, comparatively speaking, is vast and bleak; but, even at a short distance beyond Paris towards the South, the country becomes more pleasing and attractive. Trees of a larger growth, fine spreading oak, tall larches, pleasant valleys, and silvery rivers, vary the face of nature, and present a cheerful and luxuriant scene

APPROACH TO LYONS.

We reached the village of Macon, which is seated on the right bank of the river Saone, and, like Chalons, has its beauty confined to one view, early in the evening. The line of houses which forms the street; the quay, and the bridge, are handsome, as also the public walk which

you traverse on leaving the town. Throughout France, in every little city, however inconsiderable, there is a shaded and well-sheltered public walk. This seems as indispensable as a café. These two lounging places are never empty, though they do not now perhaps present altogether the aspect they were wont to have. Formerly the French gaily danced away care, and laughed at poverty; but now, having become individually politicians, they are much more thoughtful and grave. The banks of the Saone, as the river widens after leaving Macon, become rich and beautiful, displaying an extended region of wood and meadow; while the eye, carried up the country, rests on the fresh green and varied forms of the sunny hills. On these hills grow the most precious wines of France, while the country is beautiful, rich, and fertile in every kind of produce; and still as we proceeded, new and pleasing views presented themselves. On the opposite bank we beheld towns, castles, and convents rising in the distance; sometimes, seated on the summit of a gentle elevation, lay spread out the cheerful village, with its spires shining through the stately trees; sometimes, with picturesque effect, the white dwellings of the farmer shewed themselves on the rising bank, overhanging the broad clear stream below. The country, where we were travelling, expanded wide in low and somewhat marshy ground, but, enriched with

fine green wood, always open, and presenting extensive stretches of champaign country.

At length we approached Mont d'Or. The river, running flat and still, opens wide as a lake, and seems to lie at the foot of this beautiful sloping hill. In this district I observed a peculiarity in the manner of building, from which its general appearance derives much beauty. Each gentleman's seat, or farm-house, has a low running line of front, from some one point of which, in an irregular form, rises a higher building, bearing somewhat the aspect of a tower, and giving an antique cast to the dwelling; its lower parts are capt with that flat projecting roof, which everywhere strongly characterizes the architecture of southern countries. Through all this tract of rich and fertile plains, the horizon is bounded by the distant mountains of Switzerland; Savoy just opening to the eye like a long blue undulating line; and occasionally the summit of Mont-Blanc may be discerned, mingling its towering height with the clouds. As you ascend Mont d'Or, every step of your progress is marked by new and striking objects; and from its summit the prospect is most superb. To the west is seen all the wild and hilly country of Auvergne; to the south, the great chain of mountains, blue and splendid; and to the north, the fine valley of the Saone, and the high grounds around Autun. This valley, in which the view of the river is

lost in its beautiful bend round the foot of Mont d'Or, extends for fifty miles; but still you see nothing of Lyons, to which you are approaching. At length, after a period of enjoyment and delight in surveying the surrounding scenery, we turned towards the valley below, and proceeded to descend a precipitous hill. But yet no token of this great capital appears; no smoke, no spires, no suburbs of clustering houses; but splendid-built villas of white stone in the best style of architecture, with cultivated fields, orchards, and gardens, adorn and enrich the slopes and hills. Another sweep of the river brings you upon the deep and rocky channel on which Lyons is seated, but still you see only a succession of villas of every varied and elegant form; nor do you discover the city until you are actually on the level of the Saone. Few, I believe, conceive rightly the aspect of this singular place, once the centre of the Roman dominions in the north, now the most celebrated for manufactures, and lately distinguished by revolutionary scenes which disgraced human nature.

The ancient city of this name, founded forty-two years before the Christian era, lay high on the face of the hills, as is attested in the present day by relics of every kind. In the year 145, it was in one night burnt to the ground; but shortly afterwards rebuilt by a grant from the Emperor Nero. On that side of the hill where the city stood,

near the site of the Forum built by Trajan, are found masses of melted metal, marbles, and other remains, which attest the calamity so pathetically described by Seneca. On the bronze tablets found here are inscribed portions of the harangue of Claudius before he became Emperor, imploring the Senate to grant to Lyons, his native city, the title of a Roman colony. Germanicus, Caracalla, and Marcus Aurelius, were born here. The father of St Ambrose was Prefect in this city; and the architect of the Tuilleries, Philip de l'Orme, as also the architect of the admired church of St Genevieve in Paris, was a native of this place.

The entrance into Lyons gives no impression of the importance of the city, or any intimation of its real grandeur. You descend at once to the level of a road resembling a quarry, and formed by the passage of a river, the depth of which is apparently increased by the shadow of the rocks rising perpendicularly on either side. The road continues through a street of houses six or seven stories high, built against the rock. The continued height, the uniformity, and the architecture of this line, are imposing at a distance, and produce feelings which the beggarly and desolate appearance of the dwellings destroys on a nearer approach.

Proceeding along this gloomy range of buildings, the river lying deep in the channel below, you enter by a

gate at which your passport is required; and there, is the first view of the many bridges of Lyons, and of the opposite side of the Saone. Here the channel of the river gradually expands, and a new light falls on its surface. A widened space presents to the eye a large town and finer buildings, but still bearing a uniformly gloomy aspect, till you arrive at the Prison and Courts of Justice. These are under one roof, and just beyond them, the magnificent Cathedral of St John, an ancient and dignified edifice, terminates the grand view. A splendid new bridge crosses the river, leading to a square, styled La Place de Belle Cour, being the most considerable in the city. As you cross Pont St Vincent, approaching from the north, you see, opposite to the cathedral, and lying low on the side of the Saone, l'Eglise d'Ainey, interesting as the site of part of the old city. This church was raised on the ruins of an ancient temple, dedicated to Augustus by the people of Gaul. Stones, bearing Roman inscriptions, are in the front of the building, the most conspicuous part of which, is a tall shapeless tower of the oldest Gothic order, with ranges of little columns one above the other. Within the church are two granite columns of enormous size, nine feet in circumference, and originally twenty-six in height, but now cut across in the middle, one half set up to support the sanctuary, the other still lying on the ground. They are supposed

to have stood in front of the original Temple, which had been of vast extent.

From the bridge you look back towards another great stone bridge, behind which rises a superb façade of antique houses, the whole presenting a *coup-d'œil* still more imposing than the view of the old bridge of Paris, closed by the towers of Notre Dame.

This portion of the city is undistinguished by one fine mansion, and consists merely of streets of lofty buildings, which look well at a distance, but, on nearer inspection, are found to be only wretched neglected dwellings, the abodes of artificers, and of the poorest mechanics. I have traversed all the meaner parts of Lyons, looked into their crooked alleys and stair-cases;—examined what might be called hiding-places for revolutionary hordes;—and sought my way through dark courts, whose narrow stair-cases could emit hundreds of desperadoes, and have actually found these vomitories ready to pour them forth. On entering a silk or gold-wire-drawing manufactory, I have found naked walls, patched windows, and wide empty rooms, containing for furniture nothing but the spinning-looms, an earthen pitcher, some broken plates, and crooked spoons, with a few loaves of bad bread. The inmates of these wretched places, were commonly an old woman, and a crowd of half-idle lads, lamenting the fall of Buonaparte and the close of the military system, which,

while lessening the number of competitors for bread, had increased the demand for silk, fringe, gold, and all the gaudy apparel suited to military splendour.

Much the finer portion of the city is that which lies beyond the Bridge. Here the great square opens; one side of it, adorned with trees, is low-built and ancient, and bears an antique cloistered aspect. The other is modern, and much after the Parisian style;—very high, but with little ornament, and of simple architecture:—here are situated the Governor's residence, the Post-Office, and other official houses;—also two hotels for strangers, which we found, as we had been led to expect, very expensive. The fourth side of the square is occupied by *cafés*, a few booksellers' shops, scantily provided, and dress shops. Music-books, or jewellery, are not much in vogue in this Manchester of France.

The square next in size is la Place des Taureaux, where the Hotel de Ville is situated. This edifice is built after a design of Mausard. It is magnificent, but has some architectural faults. It is too high for its width, and the courts are too long. The entrance is by a superb flight of low steps into the first court; and the view from that into the second, (also supported by arches,) having a flight of stairs terminated by a fine iron gate, which opens into the other side of the square, is very splendid. The dif-

ferent levels, courts, stairs, and vast halls, render it a noble building.

From the bridge which crosses the Rhone, the scene is very fine: and on the opposite bank all looks green and beautiful. The quay at this end of the bridge, begins with a noble embankment, in close steps from point to point, leading far down into the stream. The river is here occupied by mills constructed for the purposes of manufacture, on boats anchored in its rolling waters. This front of the city forms a great line of uniform buildings, comprising several public edifices. The first is just at the end of the bridge, the great Hotel Dieu, one of the most magnificent hospitals in Europe.

This building was founded above 1200 years ago, towards the middle of the sixth century, by Childebert, son of Clovis, and his wife, Queen of the Ostrogoths. The body of the building, which is of vast extent, is in the form of a Greek cross. The grand Infirmary is nearly 500 feet in length. In the centre of the cross a high altar is raised, commanding a view to the extremity of the most distant wards. In all the parts and offices of this institution—in its chemical hall, laboratory, apothecary's shop, baths, washing-houses, and refectories—in its correct division of wards for fresh wounds—in the attention and skill displayed by its surgeons and physicians—it excels everything I have ever seen. There are two large

and lofty apartments, styled chambers of the convalescent, the patients of which are received at meals in the refectory. This is an admirable arrangement. An order of nuns, 150 in number, perform the duty of nurses; they watch over and tend the sick, administer the medicines, and prepare the diet. Ten surgeons and the physicians attend the hospital, accompanied by their pupils.* The space and arrangements are sufficient to receive 3000 patients; their number now exceeds 1000.

Next to the Hotel Dieu, stands the Academy of Science, or Public Library; then the Banking-houses; and lastly, the Ball-rooms, surrounded by public gardens. The quay does not resemble that of commercial towns—here are no vessels, no lading and unlading, no bustle or confusion, no stairs. Lyons is a manufacturing, not a trading city. The quay is merely a splendid stone embankment; the houses, a superb row or street—the river is a grand, wide, navigable, yet rural-looking stream; the opposite side low and beautifully green, studded with pretty villas—the mills anchored on this side are large and numerous, and give additional effect to the scene.

In 1760 the population of Lyons amounted to 160,000, and now there are no more than 100,000. The decrease is considerable, but the appearance of desolation is much

* Rabelais was one of their physicians during a period of five years.

greater than might be expected, considering that the number of inhabitants is still so respectable. Behind the splendid row of houses, which I have just described, betwixt the Quay du Rhone and the line of the Saone, lies the crowded part of the city; and here disorder and filth meet the eye in every quarter. Gloomy streets, crooked courts, ruins of monasteries, smoked walls, and patched windows, give the idea of inconceivable poverty and wretchedness. In all but its distant aspect, Lyons is a miserable place—its population, its trade, its riches, are all evidently fast declining—no chariots, no fine horses, no signs of luxury, no bustle or busy motion of carts or waggons is visible; but on every side are tokens of desolation and decay. To the thousands of sallow beings sitting at the loom, weaving silk, or drawing gold wire, nothing seemed to give animation but the suspense and agitation, awakened by the sounds of revolt.

The bridges form a considerable feature in the city—Lyons has eight bridges, six crossing the Saone, and two over the Rhone. The first is *Pont St Vincent*, a wooden bridge of three arches, built over the narrowest part of the Saone where its course was changed, and where the barracks are situated. The second, the *Pont de Pierre*, had been so named when it was the only stone bridge in the city; it has nine arches, and is nearly two hundred years older than the first bridge over the Rhone, being

erected by Humbert, Archbishop of Lyons, in the eleventh century. It is built of large coarse stones, having a most venerable aspect, and exhibiting on its surface the true green rust of antiquity. At this spot there are numerous boats, and a greater life and action than in any other portion of the city. Here, also, there is a Nautical Academy, or school for swimming, arranged according to the French manner. I attended several practical lessons, which presented the drollest sight imaginable. The boats of the school are chained to the middle arch of the bridge, under which a tumultuous stream flows with a current too rapid to be stemmed by human strength. Into this, eight or ten men, the commonest fellows in Lyons, were thrown, with ropes about their bodies, and splashed and sprawled along a line of five yards, guided by the masters of the academy. The bridge is crowded at all hours with spectators to witness this scene. Many of the stones of this bridge, which had been taken from the hill above where the ancient city stood, bear Roman inscriptions.

The third bridge, *Le Pont de l'Archevesque*, which leads from the cathedral to the square, is modern and beautiful. It lies flat and even, with noble arches. The fourth, called *Pont Volant*, is a paltry wooden bridge. The fifth is *Pont Maraud*, which crosses the Rhone. It is built solidly of wood, is of great length and singular

beauty, with every mechanical contrivance for exposing little surface to the currents of this rapid river, and flanked at each end with two stone towers. This noble bridge terminates with the view of splendid ball-rooms, and other elegant buildings; partly masked by fine trees; and leads to public gardens styled *Promenade du Petit Bois*, but more commonly *Le Breton*. Near these gardens, and hard by the river side, there is a green meadow, a place rendered memorable by circumstances of deep and touching interest. On this spot were massacred some of the wretched victims of the Revolution. The people of Lyons, with a just sensibility, have named it "the Field of Sorrow," "*Champ de la douleur*." "A body of the citizens were carried forth to this place, conducted by the gendarmerie. In crossing the bridge they were counted over, and being found to exceed the allotted number by two persons, the commanding officer, Vallot, was informed of the circumstance, and was asked, 'whether the two should be saved?' and in such a case which two? He replied, 'What matters it? who cares for two more or less? if they go to-day, they do not go to-morrow.' They proceeded, therefore, and two hundred and ten men, accompanied by these two ill-fated beings, whom accident had involved in the massacre, were conducted to death. Their hands were tied behind them, and they were bound to a cable, passed from tree

to tree, along a range of tall willows; the soldiers were drawn up in an opposite line, with two pieces of artillery. At the appointed signal, their limbs flew in every direction. Those whose arms were shot away fell from the cable, and rose and fled, pursued by the cavalry, who cut them down. Those who were wounded, but yet not released from the cable, cried out to their butchers to finish their work; and they did so without delay with the bayonet and sabre. Their number was such as to render the work of butchery long and fatiguing; many were left breathing and palpitating in the agonies of death, and next morning many, still alive, were buried with the dead, by those who came out to pillage, and who threw lime upon them still quick and alive." Such is the narrative of a Frenchman. Alas! the French have many, very many such massacres to relate; blood which ages of peace and penitence will not wash away. We saw the spot where the trees had stood. They are now cut down, and replaced by monumental stones, to the memory of those who perished.

The sixth bridge below this, and on the opposite side of the great square, is called *Pont Guillotiere*, as conducting to a suburb of that name. It is a magnificent stone bridge of twenty arches, and two hundred and sixty toises in length. It is coarsely causewayed, and rises very high a little beyond its centre, where it forms an obtuse angle,

and is so constructed as to resist the pressure of the stream. It was in this part of the Rhone, that the fishermen found the shield on which the representation of Scipio Africanus was embossed; and here also it was that a memorable and tragical scene took place, resembling that which happened at the marriage of the late King, when Dauphin. On the 21st October, 1711, the whole people of Lyons passed over this superb bridge, on their way to a village, to celebrate *le jour de Fete de St Denis de Bron.* The soldiers on guard, anxious to meet the inhabitants on their return, in their eagerness for the moment of release, sounded the retreat before the appointed hour. The crowd forced its way onwards; two carriages on the bridge, one passing, and another returning, became entangled. The difficulties were only aggravated by the endeavours of the alarmed mob to separate them; and night coming on, added terror to the scene. In vain did the magistrates endeavour to appease the tumult, and restore order. Terror increased with every moment, and no less than 238 people perished.* This awful catastrophe arose solely from the carelessness of one unfortunate wretch, Belair, the serjeant of the guards, who expiated, in a dreadful manner, his involuntary offence. He was carried to the place of public execution, and broken alive upon the wheel.

* The *Nouveau Voyage de France* (1750) says more than 400.

The seventh bridge is named *Pont Avrarche.* The portal, which is the most modern part, was built in the reign of Louis XI.

The eighth and last bridge is *Pont Malatiere.* This is the lowest bridge. It crosses the Saone at the place of its junction with the Rhone, in a sequestered and romantic spot of ground. The banks of the river are fringed with rich wood, thickly covering the face of the hill; while the stream, gradually narrowed by the intrusion of high rocks that hang over the deep and stony current, falls with impetuosity into the basin or pool below.

A little below this point, and beyond the present bounds of the city, a Roman Emperor formed the project of banking out the Rhone, with the view of extending the quay a mile and a half, by which he recovered a portion of ground, a peninsula of considerable length; and on this spot Buonaparte designed to build a palace. The inhabitants shew, with an air of triumph, the dimensions of this intended edifice, for which preparations had been made, and the ground cleared.

I have been thus particular in my description of Lyons, as it is a city so singular in itself, as powerfully to arrest the attention of the traveller, and to deserve especial notice. The interest, however, does not arise from its pictures, antiquities, or fine buildings; but from the ap-

proaches to it—from its coup d'œil—its navigable river —and its importance in the internal economy of France.

In the time of the Romans, the splendour and riches of Lyons must have been very great. Of the magnificent aqueduct built by Mark Antony, there are still most interesting remains. The commerce of Lyons, while a Roman city, was very extensive; it was the centre of trade to sixty cities of Gaul, who subscribed to build a temple for Augustus. In this temple the Lyceum of Caligula was instituted, with the singular rule, that whoever had the misfortune to produce a poor composition, should be condemned to the alternative of being thrown from the highest bridge into the river, or of expunging the work with his tongue.

On the hill above the city, at a little distance from Porte St Trènée, are the remains of the aqueduct which brought water from the river Furan; a distance of seven miles. Near the village of St Foy and Chaponot, are to be seen still standing, several arches, curiously built, according to the manner of the Romans, with rubble of stone and mortar, and layers of brick. At a short distance from this ruin stands a Convent of Ursulines, formerly the site of baths, the remains of which are still very visible. From the lower cells of this Convent there are deep subterraneous vaults, the descent into which is by a long flight of dark and ruinous steps. The early

Christians, in the times of persecution, had a church in this place, under the patronage of St Trènée, supposed to have been its founder. In the second century, in the reign of the Emperor Severus, there was a dreadful massacre of Christians; and they shew a vault, walled up, which is said to contain the bones of 2000 of these martyrs. The deep gloom—the profound silence that reigned around—the humid cold, and breathless chill, that was felt in this dreary repository of the dead, combined strongly to impress the imagination; and when we arose again into the brightness of day, the sun-beams were as light and life to the renovated spirit. The more ancient edifices of Lyons create interest from the cast and character which time bestows.

L'Eglise du Sanctuaire, built in the time of the crusades, and seated on the brow of the hill, seems, as it were, to hang over the city; while its ornamented dome of circular form, its bold projection, its walls darkened by the hue of many ages, its Gothic windows, and conspicuous position, form a character noble and interesting. The interior is vast; the nave, the side chapels, and the cross, are in good taste; but the decorations present only the paltry finery of that period; marble and stone, chiselled with toil and care, into curious and slender work, resembling Mechlin lace. Among its curiosities, there is a wretched and ludicrous German invention, a clock which

has innumerable moving figures, and a cock that claps his wings with powerful resonance. The endowments of this church were once splendid; the canons had the title of Comtes de Lyons, and ranked with princes.

In a garden near l'Eglise d'Ainey, belonging to a gentleman of the medical profession, an accidental excavation discovered several chambers with mosaic pavement. One of these, which is singularly entire and beautiful, represents, not only all the forms and ceremonies, but the accidents of a chariot race. The floor of the apartment is 14 feet long and 9 wide, edged by a rich border of the leaves of the acanthus. In the centre, in an oblong form, is represented a circus, in which are delineated the coursers, the charioteers, the attendants, the goal, and the seat of the umpires who adjudge the prize, as also various incidents inevitable in games of this nature. The ground is divided into two long courses, which are square at one end, and round at the other. At the opening of these are eight wooden barriers, from which the charioteers start; and in the centre, under a high canopy, sit the judges. A wall, separated from the arena by a deep fosse, surrounds the circus; and, in an amphitheatre rising from this, are placed the spectators. In the centre, between the going out and returning of the chariots, are the *Delphines et Ova*, with

which they corrected the courses;* and here, in an elevated situation, is seated the *Erector Ovorum*;† on the opposite side, fronting this, a pillar is erected, where a person stands bearing a branch of palm, with which to adorn the victorious horse. The competitors are distinguished by their liveries, red, blue, green, and yellow. The horses have cropt tails, after the manner of the English, and are chiefly of a reddish or flesh colour; but some are white, and others grey. Each chariot has four horses. The charioteers, in their barriers, stand ready with the reins in their hands, restraining the impatience of the steeds; when, at a signal given, the chains drop, and one broad line of chariots rushes onwards to the centre, to outstrip, to head, or stop the others; and in the dexterity displayed by the charioteers to impede, entangle, or overturn their opponents, arises the interest and amusement of the spectators; and the escaping from these disasters, "*Metaque fervidis evitata*

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* The Dolphins and Eggs were each seven in number, and movable; and one of them was set up each time the horse passed, so as to ascertain the number of courses, which otherwise might have been disputable. They are supposed to have been made of wood.

† *The Erectores Ovorum et Delphinorum*, were the persons to whom it was intrusted to set up one of each, at every turn made by the horses or chariots. Their stations were at equal distances on each side of the centre, and as they acted separately, they were a check upon each other.

rotis," marked the chief skill of the charioteer. The artist, in the representation of this course, has not spared to introduce many of the accidents which must occur in such a strife; the trumpets, the crash, and the spirit of the horses, maddened into fury, depict a scene of tumult, which is executed with consummate skill; and, indeed, the whole is expressed with singular effect.

In the very opening of the course, a charioteer is represented thrown to the ground, his horses falling, his chariot shattered to pieces. The chariots and charioteers are in grand style, the horses spirited, and full of fire. The fourth chariot is represented as if the horses had bolted from the course, and, in an attempt to leap the barriers, the charioteer, though thrown from his seat, and on the ground, seems in the act of raising his horses. To get a-head and obstruct the others, or, if headed, to grapple with and overturn the chariot of an adversary, was dexterous jockeyship. The pavement, though well preserved, has yet, in some few places, been destroyed. One injured part is the head of a horse, and it is remarkable that the head, with its nostrils, ears, and neck, is etched on stone, in the finest style, and with much character, on the space which was occupied by the Mosaic; from whence I conclude, that the outline was designed by a masterly hand, while the Mosaic itself, which has nothing of the spirit of this drawing, was committed to less

skilful workmen. These designs are finely engraven by Monsieur Artaud, conservator of the Museum; but the pavement of Mosaic in the garden is carefully preserved.*

In an ancient royal abbey, close by the Hotel de Ville, with large and splendid courts, surrounded by colonnades, the museum of natural history is placed, where there is a small but select collection of paintings, and the colonnade below contains many singular subjects of Eastern, and European antiquities found in the Roman provinces. The exchange is daily held there, in a low-vaulted, but superb chamber, of a most antique and melancholy cast. There are many churches in Lyons, but none fine, none rich or adorned with paintings. The public library is an elegant room, 150 feet long, and of beautiful proportions. Its fine range of windows commands a vast extent of prospect over the opposite coast of Dauphiny, with the two bridges of the Rhone, and the distant line of hills bounded by the snow-capt Alps.

On leaving Lyons, we passed along the Pont de la

* Caligula, who resided long at Lyons, delighted in driving, and contended in the circus himself. It may be doubted whether this Mosaic was intended to commemorate his feats, or in compliment to Ligurius, High Priest in the Temple of Augustus, and superintendant of the games. A stone has been found with this inscription, "*Ludos circeos dedit.*'

Guillotiere, and looking back from thence on this beautiful city, we beheld the finest and fairest view in France. The Rhone, with its beautiful quays, fringed with stately trees, supporting as it were, and giving relief to a line of houses seven stories high, is seen sweeping round the city, and the effect of this view is heightened by the grand façade of the Hotel Dieu, with its noble dome. The range of hills on which once stood the ancient Roman city, with its baths, aqueducts, palaces, and temples, rises behind, and the prospect terminates in the distant view of Mont d'Or.

After proceeding through suburbs like those of Paris, you look onward to the course of the river, which now hastens to join the Saone, and, as far as the eye can reach, lies a flat country, covered with foliage and low green-wood, interspersed with hamlets and country-seats. We pursued our route through rich plains, and woods, and cultivated grounds. The Rhone, united with the Saone, runs rapidly towards the ocean. Lyons is here lost sight of, and the view before you is bounded by the distant mountains of Savoy. Every foot of the road is shaded with trees, which line its edge, while, on gentle acclivities, or lying deep in the hollows of the higher grounds, is seen the hamlet, or rural village, with the spires of churches and convents, mingling and rising

from among the foliage and rich verdure, in which they are embosomed. From this high and wide-spread country, still bearing all the peculiar character of France, we descended into the small market town of Tour du Pin.

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CHAPTER SECOND.

PASS OF THE ECHELLES—VALE OF THE ARCO—ASCENT OF MOUNT CENIS—MOUNT CENIS—SUZA—RIVOLI—APPROACH TO TURIN—TURIN—EXECUTION OF A CRIMINAL—PALACE—CHURCH OF ST JOHN.

PASS OF THE ECHELLES.

After leaving the village of Pont de Beauvoisin, we pursued our route through beautiful fields and wooded scenery, here opening into the first highland pass. On the right hand rise mountains, steep and abrupt—on the left are high rocks, presenting a fine front, to the extent of a mile and a half—and below this deep precipice, rolls the mountain stream Le Guierre, foaming, and tearing its way among the rocks—its clear and sparkling waters receiving their tint and colouring from the surrounding objects. At times, the stream, sinking into deep dells, and winding amidst abrupt clefts, seemed totally lost, and then again bursting forth, hurried down in a full

rapid current, along banks shaded by the richest copse-wood.

We now began to ascend towards the Pass of the Echelles, formed by Charles Emanuel, Duke of Savoy, in the year 1609: perhaps one of the most singular works in the world. The village below is called the Echelles, as from thence the former pass into Savoy opened; the ascent being carried along steep and rugged rocks, resembling an almost perpendicular stair-case, or flight of steps.

Through this pass, on mules and beasts of burden, all the commodities of Savoy were carried. The road formed by Emanuel, and substituted for this, excels in grandeur every work of art and nature combined which can be conceived. It mounts by a steep and difficult ascent: on the left, a low parapet guards it from the deep precipice which overhangs the river; while on the right, the mountain, vast and stupendous, rises straight and perpendicular as a wall. From this elevation all the wide expanse of hill and valley below is open to view—it presented a cheerful and tranquil scene of cattle, and peasants busied in all the labours of the field, while rural sounds, falling on the ear, produced a pleasing effect on the mind.

After a little space, which yet, from the labour of the mules, seems long, you strike all at once into the rock, the entrance to which gives you the impression of the

gateway into some strong, and almost inaccessible fort. A few steps further in this deep pass, which lies before you in a long and gloomy line, you look back on a view truly magnificent. In the centre of the opening, and dividing the entrance, stands a huge mass of rock, as if designed for the sculptured form of a giant. On the right, but on a level considerably lower, is a portion of rock resembling a tomb-stone, bearing an inscription, in memory of the founder, Prince Emanuel. And on the left, the mountain rises in stupendous basaltic pillars, straight as the stem of a cathedral column. On either side, you look down from a vast perpendicular height, as from the walls of a fortress, on a smiling country, rich, varied, and of great extent; in which the village of Echelles forms a picturesque feature. Climbing upon the natural parapet of the great central stone, and again looking down from the dizzy height, you see, far beneath, the steps of the Echelles entering the mountain, through a vast arched chasm of nearly three hundred feet in height. Turning from this prospect, and proceeding onwards, you continue to traverse a channel of more than half a mile in length, and so narrow, as to oblige the passengers, on entering, to ascertain, by loud hallooing, that no returning carriage impedes the way. This pass is styled "*Passage de la Grotte.*" It is difficult to divest yourself of the first impression received on entering it, of its being

a great fortress: its causewayed path, the hollow echoes from the horses' hoofs, its walls of dark, gloomy, and dripping rocks, rising perpendicularly to such a height, as greatly to impede the light, combine to give it the aspect of an inclosed building. On the left, where the rock seems to bear an elevation of about two hundred feet, you pass the mouth of the chasm where the Echelles, or stairs, formerly opened. This stupendous and princely work, forming the entrance into Savoy, is of such a nature, that twenty valiant men might dispute the passage against a whole army. On emerging from the pass, we looked down on the Guierre, so lately seen dashing from rock to rock, now gently gliding, in a full and quiet stream, through a rural plain, its waters urging the progress of several mills, romantically situated on its banks. We continued to travel along a beautiful road bordered by pine trees, occasionally deepening into thick woods; and traversed a bridge which crosses the Orbanne, a broad, rapid, and powerful river. From this bridge a steep ascent leads to an elevated summit, and here the eye rests on most enchanting scenery. The mountains of the pass, which you have just left, stand high and dark in the outline, forming an imposing back-ground to the small, richly-cultivated valley, spread out below; while the bridge, far beneath, lies in one long flat line, crossing the river, which

is now seen winding its way, in various bends, and gathering its tributary waters from the adjacent rocks.

After a day full of interest produced by the grand and varied scenery which had marked our progress, we descended upon Chamberry, the capital of Savoy, and the ancient residence of her sovereigns.

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VALE OF THE ARCO.

Leaving St Jean, and proceeding on our journey, we perceived the plain gradually narrowing as we approached the vale of the rapid and gloomy Arco, or Arche; whose turbid waters, gathered from the snows and mountain torrents, dash and brawl down the deep ravine of the rocks. The opening into the Vale of the Arco, or of St Jean de Morienne, by which name it is also distinguished, is grand. The road, traced through a defile of towering mountains, which present an aspect, bold, gloomy, and imposing, runs along the edge of the river, which here takes its tumultuous course over a disorderly bed of rocks and vast stones, echoing in the distance, and stunning the ear.

We now travelled on low sandy ground, picturesque, but solitary and wild: yet around the few huts, we observed every sign of industry in the poor and depressed-

looking inhabitants. Often on the sides of the mountains, even so high as to reach the yet unmelted snow, we discerned patches of cultivated ground; as also by the river side, where, in some places, the peasants had trained low vines. This place bears very evident marks of the continual decomposition of the mountains. Everywhere are to be seen enormous rocks, which have tumbled from the adjacent heights; the bed of the river is filled with them. These rocks are chiefly composed of pure limestone and chalk; sometimes of coarse white marble, tinged with red; as also of micaceous and calcareous substance, mixed with quartz; or the micaceous clay-coloured schistus. Such is the character of the waters of the Arco, and of the Soliglia, which it joins at Lans-le-Bourg (or Lanebourg), not far from Mont Cenis.

We had enjoyed, hitherto, much serene and beautiful weather; but now, constant drizzling rain, and heavy lowering clouds, succeeded to bright sunshine and clear atmospheres, giving a sombre and dreary aspect to our route. From time to time a sudden blast would, for a moment, remove the black curtain of impending clouds, unfolding to the eye a scene inconceivably grand.

The mountains were seen towering in distant elevation, their summits rising in rude piles, often bearing in their aspect strange and varied forms, of castellated towers, or of the desolated remains of some ancient city;

while the sun, freed from the obstructing clouds, gleamed and sparkled, just gilding with its rays the dashing cataract, and projecting rocks. In some places, on the brow of the mountains, stood little cabins, which appeared hardly accessible but to the chamois. We understood these abodes were inhabited only three months in the year, by persons who gather the scanty vintage, fruits, or grain, produced in this region. Towards the close of this picturesque, but gloomy road, that follows the course of the Arco, (which might emphatically be styled the Valley of Stones,) we looked towards a narrow pass, or gorge, of the mountain, bounding a beautiful little plain, which lay just before us. Here was situated a small church, surrounded by hamlets, its spire backed by a round green hill, and stunted picturesque oaks and poplars; whilst, beyond the pass, rose the Alpine mountains, forming a dark and massive back ground. This peaceful spot would make a beautiful scene for a theatre.

Leaving this village, we proceeded on our route; and after pursuing a road, steep, and difficult of ascent, we reached, late in the evening, a lonely little inn, situated on the banks of the Arco, and not far from Lans-le-Bourg, the last town in Savoy.

Here we received the unpleasant intelligence, that on the preceding Friday, the 10th of June, 1817, the storm, which at Tour du Pin had forced us to seek for shelter,

had fallen here with such fury, as to inundate the plain, and so swollen the rivers, that they had burst their banks, and carried away three bridges. This plainly accounted for the singular grandeur and force of the Arco, on whose dashing and roaring stream we had seen immense branches, and even whole trees, borne along with resistless impetuosity. At this inn we were advised to remain; for, besides the three bridges which had been undoubtedly carried off, the road was represented as so torn by the flood, as to resemble the channel of a river. Notwithstanding this intelligence, we endeavoured to proceed, but were obliged to return.

After the delay of one day, we left the inn, and continued tracing the banks of the Arco, until we reached the little city of Lans-le-Bourg, where the stream takes a different course.

ASCENT OF MONT CENIS.

At a very early hour the next morning, we resumed our journey, though still uncertain of getting on. Leaving Lans-le-Bourg, we crossed the Soliglia on a low bridge, and now proceeded by the course of this stream, rapid and furious as the Arco. On the way we passed through a sweet and romantic village, which, like the par-

tial sunshine in a gloomy day, was rendered still more lovely by the contrast of the stony valleys and black mountains, by which it was surrounded. We had not proceeded far, when we reached the spot where one of the bridges had been carried away, a rapid current filling the space which it had occupied. To avoid this, we were obliged to mount a precipice of nearly two hundred feet, terminating in abrupt angles, over which we had to pass. We must now have been driven back a second time, had it not been for the assistance of workmen, to the number of more than a hundred, employed in repairing the passes, who, in a manner, bore the carriage across the gulf.

Nothing can exceed the alacrity and zeal with which the lower class of people in Italy offer their aid: It is true, their poverty, which renders a small remuneration valuable to them, acts as a spur to their exertions; yet, their cheerfulness, their obliging readiness, is so pleasing, that a traveller feels relieved and happy, in being able to shew his gratitude, by paying them for their services.

Safely landed on level ground, we resumed the usual road; and passing betwixt two steep rocks, that hung over a grand and tumultuous fall of water, we travelled for several miles, accompanied by the continued roar of a cataract, till 12 o'clock, when we reached the inn where our mules were to repose, before we began the ascent of Mont

Cenis. Here we entered on a magnificent road, composed of a fine gravelly soil, upon a soft limestone rock, of thirty or forty feet wide. The easy ascent by traverses up this precipitous mountain, prevents the traveller from observing its steepness, till having proceeded about two miles, he reaches a point, where he suddenly perceives that he has ascended a complete precipice. The mountain here presents a barren aspect, and the eye rests on the country below, with a feeling of astonishment at the height already attained. The wild and broken valley seems now only as a pathway; the village, with its church and barracks, like a diminutive model; and the brawling stream, whose dashing roar no more reaches the ear, nor its foaming fury the sight, like a small rivulet. As you ascend the mountain, the parallels of the road become shorter, and the angles consequently more frequent; and at every turn you advance to the very brink of a tremendous precipice, where neither tree, nor bush, nor object intervenes, on which the eye can rest. After a continued ascent of two hours, if the traveller looks upwards to the still narrowing conical mountain, rising precipitously above him, and then turns his eye downwards to the perpendicular depth below; he feels an awful sensation, nervous, dizzy, and insecure, accompanied by a consciousness of insignificance, amidst these stupendous objects,

increased by the silence and solitude, the wildness and rude magnificence, of this elevated region.

MONT CENIS.

Within a mile or more of the highest summit of the mountain, a space, covered by a dull, sickly green, expands into a plain, styled St Nicholas, where the lake of Mont Cenis lies, deep and dark. In the centre of this lake, we saw a little boat, with one man in it, rowing gently along. On the margin of the water are small low huts, of fifteen feet square, erected to shelter the traveller in the winter storm, when he might otherwise perish in the snows, or be driven by the furious eddying blasts into the depths below. No foliage, or bush, or tuft, or twig, or even thistle, grows on this desolate spot. Nothing is seen, save these dreary dwellings, which in this season are uninhabited.

On reaching the summit of Mont Cenis, we looked down on this plain, and on its broad flat lake, and little boat. The sun, shining over the mountain from behind, cast a deep shadow across its surface. The snow-capped Alps, spiral and pinnacled, appeared rising in the distance; whilst black and stormy clouds, curling, rolling, and streaming from below, lay beneath like a vast sea.

Posts are placed at various points to indicate the path in the winter snows. These are painted red, and are in the form of crosses, to prevent their being stolen. To pass this mountain in snow, or in a winter storm, must be attended with great danger.* When the snow lies deep on the ground, the carriages are put on sledges, and conducted by guides, who, having their feet armed by crampets, are enabled to stop or moderate the rapidity of the course.

The elevation of Mont Cenis is 678 French metres above Lans-le-Bourg, and 1077 toises above the level of the sea. The term les Echelles, applied to the first passes in Savoy, is also used to designate Mont Cenis.

Having reached the summit of the mountain, and paused a moment in contemplation, we began our descent, which was every way delightful. We rolled down a smooth gravelly road, passing through a narrow gorge, or gully, resembling a quarry, backed on the left by enormous mountains, towering high and perpendicular, and terminating in many forms of fantastic grandeur; while at the angles of the road, we sometimes caught glimpses of dells far beneath, with their villages and churches, presenting, in perspective, the beautiful scenery we were soon to approach. As the road expands, the slopes of the

* My excellent and scientific friend, Baron Lancy, crossed this mountain in eight hours, during winter, in severe and stormy weather.

mountains are covered with green and flourishing brushwood, interspersed with trees, and enlivened by the domestic aspect of cottages; the children of each hamlet tending their little flocks of goats, sheep, or cows, formed a picturesque and rustic scene, which contrasted pleasingly with the dreary grandeur of the country we had left. The descent of this rapid precipice, in which the most faint-hearted lady feels no insecurity, gives great delight. The interest still increases as you advance; for although equally smooth and safe, it is more perpendicular; and at each turning you see, at a vast distance below, the little villages, churches, and spires. As you descend from the mountain, the prospect becomes comparatively bounded. Hills, with sweet valleys between; streams, with their indented banks; tufted trees, raised into groups by the shape of the ground, form a pleasing landscape; while the mountains rising behind in boundless majesty, and the light passing clouds coursing along the horizon, or streaming from the lesser hills, add greatly to the picturesque effect. From hence we looked up to the singular pass above Suza, a gully, whence the waters of the Doria Riparia pour with the impetuous fury of a vast cataract, into the stream below. This pass was formerly styled Fort de la Brunette. It was in failing to attain this post that the celebrated Mareschal de Belleille, in 1747, met with so many disasters.

SUZA.

On the approach to Suza, and the ascent of the hill, the road is lined with fine aged trees; while at every turn, this little city, with its surrounding rocks, and romantic castle, is presented anew, through arches of far-spreading boughs. In our descent, we could not but be conscious of a milder atmosphere, and of all that intimates to the senses the approach to a new and more pleasing region. We looked forward with sensations of composure and delight, to the prospect of travelling through the great and fertile valley of Piedmont; and felt pleasure in being relieved from difficulties, trivial, but vexatious. The Doria Riparia, a beautiful mountain stream, which owes its source to the lake on Mont Cenis, comes dashing and foaming amongst the rocks, and, passing through Suza, seeks its way along the plains below. The approach to this little city is by a narrow gorge. Upon a hill, which commands the city, stands an ancient castle, of a grand and imposing aspect; and below this, through an opening in the rocks, you enter by a military gate, where your passport is required, and your baggage searched; regulations by which the traveller is continually tormented.

In passing vast boundaries, seemingly planted by nature as barriers between nations, the mind is powerfully

awakened to expectation. Every object in a new country, whether in the scenery, or in the customs and manners of the people, excites fresh animation in the traveller. The eye wanders abroad, eager in search of novelty; and the excitement of the mind gives additional charms to the surrounding objects, and new zeal to the spirit of inquiry. We did not therefore enter Suza without experiencing such emotion;—we were treading, for the first time, on Italian ground, and were prepared to behold every object with feelings of curiosity and interest. The first view of the inhabitants of this little city, gave us the impression of an amiable and gentle people. It was evening; and the citizens, priests, and soldiers, were sauntering through the dusty streets, in little friendly groups, looking upon the strangers, not with the stare of stupid curiosity, or the smile of self-complacency, but with a modest, kind, and benignant aspect; all ranks usually touching, or taking off their hats, in reply to the slightest symptom of courtesy. The town of Suza is small, and was formerly fortified, of which there are some remains, although the citadel is demolished. The church, which is respectable, and well decorated, is built upon the ruins of some vast Roman edifice. There is a fine triumphal arch, still entire, to be seen in a garden.

RIVOLI.

Early on a beautiful morning we left Suza, travelling through narrow roads, little stony vineyards, and pigmy inclosures of wheat and rye; we began to traverse the banks of the Doria, turbid as its fellow, the Arco, which runs down the opposite and western side of the Alps. Its frequent breaches over the fields, its wide-spread stony channel, its yellow waters, and roaring din, give it all the character of an Alpine stream, which, though pure at its source, becomes muddy here, from the clay of the mountains. At the narrowest point of the valley, it flows by a little fortress; and we crossed it on a bridge defended by the fort. Here the stream bursts out into a broad and pebbly strand; and the prospect begins to widen, gradually spreading out into the grand valley of Piedmont, or of the Po. On the very pinnacle of a high hill, rising in the narrowest point of the valley, stands the magnificent and antique monastery of St Michael. This superb and singular hill, with its monastery, constitutes a striking feature in the landscape, from the pass above Suza down to Florence.

Rivoli, which we reached early in the afternoon, is finely situated on a hill, at the opening of the great valley of the Po; commanding a most beautiful and mag-

nificent prospect. The eye runs along the vast range of Alps, forming a long blue line in the distance; and the gigantic mountains you have just passed, where Mont Cenis presides, are seen towering, dark and massive, against the light. From the gulley above Suza, you see the Doria bursting forth, and trace its resplendent waters, pursuing their course through the arches of the long and slender bridges which span its tide; while the evening sun flames over the mountains, shooting down through the narrow valley, and touching with vivid tints the great monastery of St Michael, which stands solitary and majestic on its lofty hill. Leaving these sublime objects, and looking in the opposite direction, we distinguished the highest points of the numerous steeples and spires of Turin, tipped with the reddening rays of the setting sun. No smoke ascends, as in northern countries, indicating the spot on which the city stands; but a light transparent haze seemed to hang over it in the pure still air; while magnificent and lofty trees marked its boundaries with a dusky line. The whole of this fine scenery receives an added charm in the softening features of the rich fields, and woody plains, which, reaching far to the west, spread out below, enlivened by innumerable white dwellings, giving life and animation to the picture. While thus, after a sultry day, inhaling the refreshing breeze of the evening, and contemplating the varied

beauty of the surrounding landscape, we were naturally led to compare it with the climate and aspect of the country we had left; and could not hesitate to prefer Italy, with its splendid sun, its soft, balmy, and clear atmosphere; vast mountains, and noble rivers.

France is like a maritime country, broad, flat, and unprotected; the soil is comparatively barren, the sky cloudless; and there are no mountains to have effect on the landscape, or influence on the air. Susceptible as I have ever been of tranquil or perturbed landscape, of the beauties of opening or declining day, I never remember, during my residence in France, to have been charmed with the morning or evening sun—I never recollect any difference of light, but in intensity—the sky is ever uniform, like that of Coleridge, in his enchanted ship—the sun rises in the east, mounts to noontide, and descends in the west, without producing any other variation, than that of length of shadow. That which has been praised by the ignorant, a sky ever clear and transparent, distinctly marking the outline of every building, is, to the painter's eye, destructive of all richness and grandeur.

The splendid edifices which adorn Paris; the Louvre, the bridges, Notre Dame, are ever seen clear and well-defined, presenting the same uniform aspect. From Cambray to Paris, from Paris to Lyons, from Lyons to the western side of the Alps, I never saw a sky in which

the beholder could take delight, or which an artist would wish to copy. Their finest weather offers a clear, spotless, burning atmosphere, and in a bird's-eye view of the country, each city, spire, or tree, is seen distinct as in a map. The storm rises with no portentous point, to which you can trace the coming mischief; no vast clouds appear bursting over the scene; but a uniform and dusky atmosphere covers the whole hemisphere, down to the horizon. There are no mountains to attract clouds; no valleys to give currents of air, and changeful variety, to enliven the landscape. No one who has not passed the Alps can know how precious variety is, or how great a share it has in forming pleasing impressions on the mind. I speak of the north of France, the middle and south; the department of the Rhone, from Grenoble to Nice, and Marseilles, must of course partake of the atmosphere of Italy.

The magnificence of the castle of Rivoli, arises rather from the grandeur of its situation than from its intrinsic beauty. It is a coarse, bulky, brick house; and whatever the artist might have designed it to be, it is as like a cotton-mill as a palace.

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APPROACH TO TURIN.

Turin is situated at the distance of nine miles from Rivoli; the road, which is broad and fine, is lined on either side with a double row of magnificent trees, and bears rather the aspect of a splendid royal avenue, than a high-way. It lies in a direct line, straight as an arrow, which occasions a singular optical deception.

On first setting out, you imagine Turin to be just at hand; insomuch, that the way literally seems lengthening as you go; for, after an hour's driving, you hardly appear to be nearer than when you set out; which, to a traveller, eager to behold this beautiful city, is very tantalizing. At length we reached the desired object; the approach to which was enlivened by the appearance of a number of well-dressed pedestrians, moving along, in small parties, or family groups; some sauntering, others sitting on benches under the shade of the trees; but no carriages or post-chaises, no young men on horseback, gave gaiety to the scene, or presented any of that bustle and business which usually mark the approach to a capital; on the contrary, a certain quietness and soberness of aspect seemed to prevail. We noticed that priests bore a great preponderance amongst the numbers that formed the parties. We had

seen little of this in France; and were struck with the difference. A mild and grave demeanour, pale, and rather sallow complexions, indications of labour and study, according well with the priestly garb, characterized the general appearance of these men, and inspired a feeling of respect and interest towards them. Such is the aspect that suits holy men; and on such, were it even delusive, the mind loves to dwell. An air of quiet, combined with the simplicity of the dresses of the women, (most of whom wore black,) gives a certain sombreness to the scene; singularly contrasting, in our minds, with the bustle, gay colours, and gaudy dresses, observable in the public walks of a French city. We entered Turin without passing through any military gate or ordnance; but gave our passport at the opening of a broad street, which runs (as you at once perceive all the streets to do) into the centre of the city, or great square, where the royal palace stands. On this spot, before the fortifications were demolished, stood Porta di Suza; and from this point the two channels of the aqueduct diverge. This aqueduct was constructed 300 years ago, by Emanuel Philibert. It encircles the city; carries water into all the streets, flooding them daily; and waters its gardens.

TURIN—EXECUTION.

Before I write anything of this charming little city, I cannot refrain from unburdening my mind, by writing down a few notes of the melancholy scene I witnessed this morning. I had heard, the night of my arrival, that an unhappy wretch was to be beheaded,—I little imagined, broke on the wheel. In my morning walk, I read on the corners of the streets, the affiche, stating his accusation, conviction, and sentence, accompanied with a most useful warning to the people; a call to mark the justice of his execution, and a notice of the place in which he was to be put to death. He was one of those hardened villains, who had watched his victim to the turning of a street, and suddenly stabbed him with a stiletto. One feels little compassion for a wretch who, not content with robbing, strikes from behind, and pillages the victim while weltering in his blood. I thought I could bring myself to witness the execution of so hardened a villain; and continued to walk along the great street which leads directly to the square, still undecided and hesitating; when, all at once, I found myself in the midst of a tumultuous crowd, by which I was carried along, without the power of resistance. The streets of Turin are intersected at right angles, and are almost all

equally broad and straight. On a sudden, the crossings were filled with a prodigious mob, hurrying from every quarter—sounds of deep and solemn music were heard; and I beheld the flags and insignia of a procession, which I imagined to be purely religious; when, to my surprise and horror, I found myself exactly opposite to the distracted criminal, whom they were conducting to execution, in all the agonies of terror and despair. He was seated in a black car, preceded by arquebusiers on horseback, carrying their carabines pointed forward. These were followed by a band of priests, clothed in long black robes, singing, in deep and solemn tones, a slow mournful dirge; part of the service for the dead. A hot burning sun shone with a flood of light; and though it was mid-day, such was the silence, and such the power and effect of this solemn chant, that its sound was re-echoed from every distant street. The brothers of the Misericordia, clothed in black, and masked, walked by the side of the car, and joined in the chant. On the steps of the car sat a man bearing a flag, on which death was represented in the usual forms, and on which was inscribed in Latin, (if I read it rightly,) "Death has touched me with his fingers;" or, "Death has laid his hands on me." On each side of the car, the officiating priests were seated; and in the centre sat the criminal himself. It was impossible to witness the condition of this unhappy

wretch without terror, and yet, as if impelled by some strange infatuation, it was equally impossible not to gaze upon an object so wild, so full of horror. He seemed about thirty-five years of age; of large and muscular form; his countenance marked by strong and savage features; half naked, pale as death, agonized with terror, every limb strained in anguish, his hands clenched convulsively, the sweat breaking out on his bent and contracted brow, he kissed incessantly the figure of our Saviour, painted on the flag which was suspended before him; but with an agony of wildness and despair, of which nothing ever exhibited on the stage can give the slightest conception. I could not refrain from moralizing upon the scene here presented. The horror that the priest had excited in the soul of this savage, was greater than the fear of the most cruel death could ever have produced. But the terrors thus raised, were the superstitions of an ignorant and bewildered mind, bereft of animal courage, and impressed with some confused belief, that eternal safety was to be instantly secured by external marks of homage to the image. There was here none of the composed, conscious, awful penitence of a Christian; and it was evident, that the priest was anxious only to produce a being in the near prospect of death, whose condition should alarm all that looked on him. The attempt was successful. But I could not help feeling, that

this procession, so like an auto-da-fe, had more the character of revenge, than of the salutary justice of the law. The inscription over the bloody hand painted on the the flag, should have been one to teach the people, that murder was doomed to meet with an awful retribution —" Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

The procession, winding through deep and narrow streets under a burning sun, while every avenue became more and more choked by an increasing crowd, moved slowly on to the place of execution, which was situated in a solitary piece of waste ground behind the great Church. The punishment had been mitigated at the earnest solicitation of the Brothers of the Misericordia. The *coup de grace* was immediately inflicted, and the head of the criminal nearly severed from his body at one stroke.* When the execution was over, the body was thrown carelessly over the wheel, (seemingly a common chariot wheel,) and a priest, in an impressive manner, addressed the mob from the scaffold, and then retired.

* The coup de grace was not usually given until every limb of the person condemned had been broken. He then received a violent blow, from the instrument used in breaking the limbs, upon the chest, which generally put an end to his sufferings. This was called the coup de grace, and the head was afterwards severed from the body. When the sentence was remitted, the coup de grace was given at first, which appears to have been the case in the present instance.—Ed.

The body continued thus exposed for some hours. I could not help feeling that if the sentence had been carried into full effect, it would have been too sanguinary to suit the ends of public justice. Although it must be confessed, that if cruelty in punishment could ever be justified, it would be so when its object was to prevent the dreadful crime of assassination.

Of 10,000 persons who were present, I do not believe there were twenty women, and those of the lowest description.

Turin, though a very small city, considered as a capital, is yet a most princely place. It is much more regular than the Italian cities are in general: it is, however, modern, and retains none of those features of antiquity, which are to a city what nobility is to a family, an honour that casts a veil over many defects. Towards the centre, a noble square is formed by the Royal Palace, Government House, and other public edifices. From this square run, in straight lines, broad and handsome streets of from eighty to one hundred feet wide, and of simple but fine architecture.

The windows of the houses are large, and the frequent balconies of the second story give a lively and splendid appearance to the whole. Workmen are now busily employed in converting the space, formerly occupied by the fortifications, into gardens, and public walks; which will

prove a great embellishment, by opening, in every direction, the pleasing view of rich verdure and fine trees. The broadest and finest street of Turin lies in a direct line from the square, and terminates in a view of a handsome bridge, called the Bridge of the Po, which here passes the city. Turin is exactly what a child would design for the model of a city, having the King's Palace in the centre, with large and wide streets running towards it.

The Court is now at Genoa, which gives a greater appearance of stillness to this city, through the absence of the bustle, gaiety, and noise, in some measure inseparable from a royal residence.

The King's Palace has no mark of distinction except a royal guard. The apartments are splendidly furnished; but a palace, unless full of gay and gallant company, is always tame and dull. I know not whether the imagination was impressed by the recollection of past revolutionary scenes, or by the gloom arising from the absence of the royal inmates of the palace; but neither its rich and handsome decorations, nor its innumerable paintings, could inspire my mind with any cheerful ideas: a sombre stillness seemed to prevail throughout, giving to the whole an expression of melancholy.

On the first landing-place of the palace stairs, there is an equestrian statue of Victor Amadeus, the horse

trampling over slaves, who are beaten down under his hoofs—a barbarous conception! The figures of the slaves are well executed, but the statue itself is contemptible.

The artist Trisian was a pupil of John of Bologna.—The Palace of the Dukes of Savoy, situated in the same square, was erected in the year 1416: It received, in 1720, a new front by Ivara, which has been much admired; but chiefly, I suppose, because it is the only work of his, not altogether contemptible. It presents a Corinthian peristyle with pilasters, but the shafts are too long, the capitals too heavy, and the cornice too ponderous for the building. Each "coigne of vantage" is surmounted and defended by figures of armed men. The Duke of Northumberland has not a more numerous array of plastered figures on the ramparts of Alnwick Castle, than the King of Sardinia on this Palace. Ivara, who was a Sicilian, studied at Rome under the best masters; but they all failed in teaching him simplicity. There is nothing in this city from which the traveller can derive much interest or pleasure. It can be regarded only as an elegant place of repose for a few days. To the antiquary it presents no objects of inquiry; to the artist, no pictures, statues, or buildings, worthy of particular notice. The Royal Palace, that of the Prince Carignani, now presumptive heir to the crown, the Go-

vernment House, Theatre, Town Hall, and Market Place, are the chief public edifices.

The number of Churches in Turin is remarkable, amounting, it is said, to at least a hundred and twenty, including chapels and convents. Many of them are distinguished by richness of ornament and good architecture. I was especially struck with the noble aspect of the Church of St John, situated immediately behind the palace; a flight of marble steps leads to the western front, which is very fine; the entrance is wide, and the doorway richly ornamented with well-executed basso-relievos, and supported on each side by marble pilasters. On entering the church, the first object which invites attention, is a beautiful circular font of white marble, festooned in curious workmanship. At each side are finely ornamented chapels, and at the farther end of the church are planted the King's seat, and the organ gallery, both very splendidly adorned: One of the chapels (that of St Michael) is truly superb, and well deserves a particular description. It stands high, like a gallery, above the level of the church, of which it forms a part, opening from its centre by a handsome flight of steps, and separated only by a fine marble balustrade, which, as well as two superb columns on either side, are of black marble. The form of the chapel is circular, and the architecture very fine. The cupola is supported by pillars

of black marble, grouped two and two; the bases and capitals bronze, richly gilt, producing an admirable contrast to the black marble. The floor is pure white marble, studded with golden stars. The ceiling, formed of trellis work, is whimsical; but the dark colouring, and sedate ground, correspond with the richness of the whole. The spaces betwixt the columns are filled with oval medallions, painted sky-blue, and filled with "*ex-votos*,"* some, they say, of a singular kind; for, besides noses, arms, eyes, and fingers, they omit no part of the human body that has received a cure, or been preserved from peril. Thus, we find Benvenuto Cellini on the door of Santa Lucia, offering up a golden eye, of curious workmanship, in thankfulness to God and that saint, for having been relieved from a splinter, which had entered so deeply, as to threaten the loss of sight. These *ex-votos*, of every form and material, may be purchased. The effect of the whole chapel is grand, solemn, and imposing, without being gloomy. The altar is magnificent, although it was pillaged by the French of many valuable and precious gems. I am told that, among other valuables, this chapel once possessed a miraculous figure of the Virgin, *la Madonna della Consolazione*, the size of life, composed of

* These "*ex-votos*" are derived from heathen practice. The first instance of such offerings on record, is found in the first book of Samuel, chap. vi. v. 3, 5, &c. —Ed.

solid silver, and bearing on her head a crown of diamonds of the finest water. This statue disappeared, but not miraculously. Had this chapel been stripped by the French, even to the walls, its intrinsic beauty would have made it still striking. In the centre of the chapel, and in just proportion to its size, stands the altar—a low railing in white marble, surrounded with little seraphim, ten or twelve in number, marks the outer circle, and within, at the four corners, stand four angels, executed in a very good style. Hung round the altar are lamps, which burn continually, night and day. The whole is surmounted by a gilded glory, which, by rendering the height disproportioned, much injures the effect. This altar is not one of the least important in the world, since it is reputed to contain the shirt of our Saviour. While other churches had only the holy handkerchiefs, it was a proud triumph to possess a treasure so much more glorious. The history of the shirt is long, and perhaps not very interesting; but in the time of Calvin, who denied its authenticity, it was the cause of many controversial writings, some of which are still extant. It was a gift from Geoffroi, on his return from the Holy Land, to Amadée the First. His grand-daughter, into whose hands it naturally devolved, had the ill-fortune, when going on a visit to Chamberry, to meet Louis of France, and his royal consort, to be attacked on the road by a band of

robbers, who, overcoming her guards and attendants, began forthwith to pillage the baggage. The miraculous shirt was preserved in a beautiful silver box, and no sooner had the banditti touched it, than they suddenly became impressed with such awe and terror, that they at once suffered the princess to continue her journey, replacing and restoring everything. Margaret was filled with amazement and joy, which she expressed so forcibly, that the king and his queen naturally felt a strong desire to possess the shirt; and when she was about to take leave of them, these good people thought it a propitious moment to beg it of her; Margaret flatly refused to part with it; but, when she re-commenced her journey, the mules who carried the holy treasure could not be persuaded to stir a foot; and, as Sterne says, "there is no arguing with any of their family." Margaret, therefore, taking the hint, regarded this as an intimation from Heaven, and left the shirt at Chamberry, where it was placed in a church. Some time after, during a terrible conflagration which happened in the city, the church which held the relic was burnt to the ground; the silver box was also consumed, but the shirt was only just singed sufficiently to give evidence of the miracle. All this is averred in different works, written in answer to Calvin.

The church of Corpus Christi, although not generally

admired, pleased me much. The interior has an air of melancholy grandeur. It was built by Villogi; and improved by Count Alfieri, in the year 1753. Its origin and name arose from a miracle. A sacrilegious soldier, having stolen the small silver vase with the consecrated wafer, from a church in Chamberry, proceeded as far as Turin, where, believing himself safe, he stopped with his mule; but, to his utter amazement, the vase suddenly sprang up into the air, where it obstinately remained, till the Bishop Romagno, by a solemn procession, and fervent prayer, persuaded it to descend into a consecrated chalice. To commemorate this circumstance the church was built.

Among the ancient works of art to be seen in Turin, there is a celebrated Egyptian table, which is shewn with much pride. It is composed of enamelled figures, partly lined with silver, on a dark copper-coloured ground; and has once more found its way to Turin, after adventures probably as singular as those of any relic of Catholic times. It might be deemed little short of a miracle, that the soldiers, having begun to deface this precious monument, by picking out the silver, were deterred from proceeding; but this was fully as natural as miraculous: for they found the plates of silver difficult to pull off, being extremely thin, and, in all the more delicate parts, little more than mere varnish of silver. It is about

three feet and a half in length, and nearly square, crowded with Egyptian figures, and surrounded by a zodiac, which, I should imagine, may be discovered to be the most interesting, as it certainly is the most intelligible, part of the table.

Among the objects most immediately attracting the attention of the traveller, in the general picture, or coup d'œil, of Turin, the Superga may be mentioned—a church, or rather mausoleum, for the royal family of Piedmont. It is situated on a high hill, at a short distance from Turin; and was erected in fulfilment of a vow offered up to heaven, by Victor Amadeus, when the city was invested, in the year 1706, by Philip, Duke of Orleans; and this place was selected for its site, because it was here that the King and Prince Eugene stood, while they laid the plan of the battle, by which the siege was raised, and Piedmont wrested from the dominion of the French. I find that one French author, Monsieur Millin, adds another motive for the choice—"C'étoit," he says, "sur le Peton le plus élevé des coteaux qui bordent le Po, dans le lieu qui semble le plus s'approcher du ciel,"—that, being situated as near as possible to heaven, God might see his gratitude. There are, however, other motives for this choice, which may as safely be alleged: for it is not actually seated on the highest ground, but the most picturesque and beautiful; the surround-

ing country being seen in perspective, grouping around it, and so richly wooded, and studded with villas, that it seems like a prolongation of the city. As you approach Turin, the eye rests on the magnificent mausoleum; on leaving the city you still see it; and as you travel down the valley, it is again beheld with interest and admiration. Filippo Juvara was the architect of this memorable edifice.

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CHAPTER THIRD.

APPROACH TO MILAN—MILAN—CATHEDRAL—LEONARDO DA VINCI—AMBROSIAN LIBRARY—PUBLIC WORKS—CERTOSA—PAVIA—BOROMEAN COLLEGE—PAPAL COLLEGE—THUNDER STORM.

APPROACH TO MILAN.

After three days spent at Turin, we proceeded towards Milan, travelling along a fine road, and through a beautiful country, rich in the vine and olive, and enlivened by innumerable little white dwellings, that gave the pleasing impression of a busy and crowded population. At the distance of about twenty-five or thirty miles from Milan, you enter Vercelli, a fine city of considerable extent, seated on the confluence of the Sessia with the Po. From this point the face of the country takes a different aspect; the culture of rice, which begins here, wearies the eye with its unvaried green, covering a long and wide-spread tract of flat ground. On reaching Novarre, a pretty small fortified town, sixteen or eighteen

miles from Milan, the prospect again assumes a lively appearance; the rich foliage and fine verdure of the wooded banks of the Tessino, or Ticino, and as you approach the city, the elegant villas by which it is surrounded, give great beauty to the whole scene. In these climates, the purity of the air enables the eye, even in flat grounds, to discern distant objects, and to scan long spaces, and the flood of light and sunshine gives an inconceivable splendour to every scene examined through this gay medium. The landscape seems more beautiful; the cities more splendid; every spire, or tower, which, in gloomy sombre skies, takes the cast of the atmosphere, and is little observed, here glitters in the sunbeams, and bears its part in the general effect.

MILAN.

Milan is finely situated, in the centre of Lombardy, between the Ticino and the Adda, on the same plains with Pavia, Placentia, Parma, and Bologna; Florence being on a lower level, beyond a range of the Appenines, deep in the valley of the Arno.

My short stay in Milan circumscribes my notices on this city, confining them merely to a few observations on

some of its most striking features. With its general aspect I have been greatly pleased, and I am aware that the resources itpresents in science are of the highest class.

Including the suburbs and gardens, I am told Milan covers a space of ten miles. Some of the streets are wide, especially the main street, forming the centre of the city, although they are generally narrow; but the effect produced by the foliage of the fine trees, that relieve the eye in every direction, is very delightful. The Corso, or public walk, is beautiful, running along a space which opens to enchanting prospects in every direction. The impressions excited on entering Milan are very pleasing. In the evening or morning hours the shops are filled, the streets frequented, the corso covered by numbers of well-appointed carriages, and the whole presenting that busy, cheerful, crowded population, which gives the idea of a fine capital.

Milan has no foreign trade; but the canals connecting it on one side with the Adda, and on the other with the Ticino, supply vast facilities and sources of interior commerce.

Although I reached Milan at an early hour in the afternoon, yet I was so delayed by some necessary arrangements, that it was late, and night had nearly closed in, before I was at liberty to walk out. I then hurried forth in eager haste to view the Cathedral, that celebrated

monument of antiquity. Acquainted with its site only from the general impression received on approaching the city, I passed on hastily, without knowing exactly how to direct my steps: when, entering from a narrow street into a great square, I suddenly and unexpectedly turned upon this noble edifice, which, in this my first view, I beheld, not in the usual form, standing flat and monotonous, with a broad and wide-spread front; but presenting itself obliquely, its pure white marble, its dazzling spiry fret-work, rising high and bright in light, elegant, and indistinct forms.

In the shade of night the effect was superb, and for a moment I was indeed astonished. The vivid and powerful sensations, arising from first impressions, on beholding a building so beautiful and singular, cannot return a second time. There are moments when recollections of past ages crowd upon the mind—Gothic structures forcibly bring to memory images of holy rites, recalling the period when crusades and pilgrimages animated the spirit, and filled the souls of kings, warriors, and priests—when to offer relics at the sacred shrine, to adorn altars with the gorgeous spoil taken in war, was at once the means to make peace with Heaven, and obtain power over man. I stood long gazing on this splendid edifice, which, as night closed in, I distinguished only by the lustre of its own white marble.

This Cathedral, admired through long ages, termed in its own city, whose artists bear no mean name, the eighth wonder of the world, is described by a modern critic as exhibiting nothing better than a heap of unmeaning ornaments. It is easy to use this general censure, and call this wonderful structure a "Gothic chaos;" but the expression is ill applied—it is a noble remnant of Gothic splendour, and well worthy the expense and pains which Buonaparte bestowed upon it. The square in which it stands is partly occupied by a splendid official house, built of brick and stucco, with Doric columns, and of good architecture; but yet ill suited to the Cathedral, to which all should be made subservient. The other sides of the square are at least such as do not distract the eye. They consist of a line of ancient buildings, supported upon slender ill-fashioned Gothic pillars, under the arcades of which run a range of poor-looking shops.

The meanness of the adjacent buildings, their antique form, the extreme narrowness of the streets, correspond with the antiquity, and, in the contrast, give splendour to the structure of the great Cathedral, whose central spire, towering high in rich and fantastic Gothic, is seen from the moment you approach the city, rising beautiful and gay, over the bright green foliage of the fine trees that adorn the public walks.

At the first building of this Cathedral, there was no want of prayers, provisions, miracles, and donations; but, great as these were, the work at this hour is unfinished. Like the city, it has had its revolutions. St Ambrose was its first bishop, Attila its first destroyer; and after being rebuilt, at vast expense, by the citizens, it was again destroyed by fire. After this, Frederic the First, afraid lest the Milanese should possess themselves of the belfry, one of the most superb in Italy, threw it down, and nearly buried the church under its ruins. It was partially rebuilt by Lanfranc, who excited such enthusiasm in this most popular enterprize, (it being then styled, a church for the Mother of God,) that valuable donations poured in from every quarter, the poorest inhabitant contributing his mite; while the high born, the noble ladies, and matrons, brought their jewels and richest ornaments as offerings. In the fourteenth century, John Galeazzo Visconti, first Duke of Milan, who had poisoned his uncle, and his wife's father, began with zeal to rebuild the Cathedral, as a sacrifice for sin, and a peace-offering to Heaven for his crimes. Quarries of marble, and stores of riches, were prepared for the accomplishment of this holy work; which was begun after designs given by Campiglione, Nugaut, and other French as well as Italian artists. At a later period, this great work devolved on Pellegrini, an architect who, in many other

undertakings, evinced taste and skill; but, on this occasion, by changing the original plan, and casting the great front with modern doors and windows, he destroyed the unity of character in the exterior of the edifice, without improving the aspect within, which is dark, mean, and paltry.

A private individual, to make peace with Heaven on his death-bed, left a donation of 230,000 crowns to finish Pellegrini's plan; but this great bequest was wasted, and the work still unaccomplished; insomuch, that before the French Revolution, there remained, of all the riches devoted to it, only the inadequate sum of 60,000 francs. Buonaparte, ever delighted with any project which might bring celebrity to his name, furnished the necessary funds, to build the portal, and supply the ornaments which were wanting; and thus the edifice is nearly completed.

Let others say what they will, of the innumerable ornaments, the fantastic pinnacles, the whole army, as one critic terms them, of saints and martyrs, (and the host is respectable, amounting, it is said, to much more than four thousand,) I cannot but admire this building, not merely as the finest piece extant of ancient architecture, in a style now abandoned; but as in itself truly magnificent.

The side of this immense temple, the largest in Eu-

rope, except St Peter's and St Sophia, presents itself obliquely as you enter the square; the great western front being seen in fine perspective. A broad flight of steps leads up to the front portals, and five gates open, on either side, to the five parts, (*i. e.* the nave and four aisles,) into which the body of the church is divided. From the sides of the gates run up a sort of columns, like buttresses, terminating in the most beautiful pinnacles, richly decorated with statues, placed not only along their whole length, but upon the top of each spiry point. Rich, curious, antique, and splendid, are the appropriate terms to be used in describing them; although, were it not for the respect inspired for ancient times, and some mixture of reverence for the religious feelings which guided the founders of this Cathedral, this profusion of ornament might certainly be condemned as childish. The effect, however, is gorgeous; but nothing can be truly grand, or noble, that is not simple; and we contemplate the rich and varied embellishments before us, with feelings somewhat akin to those with which we admire the beauty of a curious antique cabinet. The pedestals of these Gothic pillars are enriched with basso relievo, as are also the doors: the consoles are supported by Caryatides of the size of life; and the pillars are adorned with statues in the niches. Many of these basso relievos and

statues are in the finest style; and were executed by various Italian masters.

The whole beauty of this edifice may be said to be external; its interior being sombre, cheerless, and vast, without grandeur. As the pillars, terminating in needle-like points, are numerous, the spaces allotted to the windows are very small, and, consequently, the stream of light within falls obliquely and scantily. The lights admitted betwixt the five external columns of the nave, are thin small stripes, rising high and narrow, and the great window, unlike those of Westminster, York, and Salisbury, which are of grand and noble expanse, has a mean appearance. The broad refulgent light, which should have poured in from the great gate, on the sanctuary, is intercepted by the high altar, while a Gothic screen, covered with every species of ornament, ever carved in stone, or wood, shuts up entirely the further prospect, and thus conceals what ought to be the most beautiful and attractive part of every Cathedral.

The sanctuary, which is done after a design of Pellegrini, is the only truly fine and simple piece of architecture in the interior of the building. It forms a semicircular dome, supported by four pilasters, having enrichments corresponding with those of the rest of the Church; a unity very important in producing general effect, the want of which is particularly felt in the con-

struction of the columns, supporting and separating the five great parallel divisions, which are of Grecian architecture, harmonizing little with the general character of the edifice, and of such incredible height, that, as you survey them, you despair that the eye will ever reach to the capitals.

At the first view of this vast edifice, the mind feels a sort of impatience and confusion of thought, from not being able to catch at once the great architectural lines, so as to conceive the whole composition—a sensation arising from the characteristic features that distinguish Greek and Saracenic architecture. In the first, with the exception of the supporting columns and pillars, the whole lies in great conspicuous horizontal lines, as the beams, friezes, cornices, ceilings, &c.—in the latter all stands vertically, the terminations and ornaments spiral and upright; the frieze, cornice, or beams, which compose the uniting lines in the Grecian, being formed, in the Saracenic, by the union and junction of closing arches; hence the lines of the Gothic are vertical, those of the Grecian horizontal. Any one slightly surveying the front of a Gothic Church must make this observation. Therefore the great question of taste on this subject seems to be, whether thin spiral, and perpendicular; or solid square, horizontal lines, are to be preferred. The former, perhaps, are the more pleasing for rich and

splendid ornaments, the latter for the grand and imposing.

The Black Chapel or Crypt of this Cathedral is very grand; the stairs leading to it truly superb. The small under-ground Church below the great altar, is often, as in this edifice, the most impressive, as it is always the most melancholy, part of the building; here it was that, in the times of persecution and danger, the Christians assembled to seek safety, or to pray for their murdered or martyred saints. Its low arched roof, and ancient thick square pillars, are fine. I found the priests performing morning service.

San Carlo Borromeo lies here enrobed in rich silks, and placed in a splendid silver sarcophagus. They were employed in preparing a new set of tombs, or rather in embellishing those of a long line of bishops. How silent and still this house of death, and how impressive! It has light, but it is one of their religious ordinances that lamps should be kept burning perpetually.

There is certainly something impressive in this symbol, supposed to represent purity. Often, in vast and splendid churches, my eye has been insensibly attracted to some distant corner, by the small clear flame of a solitary lamp. Unnoticed, yet continual, in the glare of day, at midnight, or the early dawn, still it burns, an emblem of time and eternity.

It was in the Cathedral of Milan, that the service, according to the rites of St Ambrose, was first performed; the chief peculiarity of which seems to be, that while in other churches the priests alone sing; in those of this city, the priests and the people sing alternately: and this is done with the professed design of interesting the congregation in the service, and of keeping them attentive.

In baptism they quite immerse the head; and at the administration of the Holy Communion, the elements are carried by ten old men and ten old women, clothed in black, the head covered with white linen, reaching to the girdle.

In the sanctuary of this Cathedral there are four statues, one of which, that of St Bartolomeo, never fails to attract attention, and obtain for the statuary that praise, which his modest, or, perhaps, rather vain, inscription affects to disclaim. "Non me Praxiteles, sed Marcus fecit Agrates," the usual rejoinder to which is, "Although not surpassing the Greek artist, it is very fine!" Nevertheless the work is altogether ludicrous, the composition base, and the execution wretched. The figure is not represented as if prepared for martyrdom, nor agitated as if touched with the sacrilegious knife: it stands already flayed, a complete upright statue, a great staring form, with the hands and fingers spread abroad, the eye-

balls strained, and the features and muscles of the face in strings. The whole anatomy, or what this Praxiteles was pleased to imagine anatomy, of the human body, from the shoulders to the finger points, is displayed by removing the skin, which is left hanging in shreds; the skin of the head hanging behind the head, the skin of the arm and leg hanging in like manner from each limb. Such is the odious and ridiculous figure, which stands in the sanctuary of the church, exhibiting itself in the tripping posture of a dancing-master, as if demanding praise from the strangers who are carried to view it. I declare, on the faith of one not unacquainted with art, nor with anatomy, that there is nothing of real anatomy, no not the slightest representation of it, in this grotesque figure; and unless strangers are to admire the graceful attitude and composed manner of a being under circumstances so excruciating, they can see nothing to cause admiration.

LEONARDO DA VINCI'S LAST SUPPER.

Nothing is more interesting than this far-famed picture, and nothing, I will venture to say, so striking to one who visits this relic of ancient art, as the condition in which he finds it. It is in a monastery, built in the

year 1464, by Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan, erected for a fraternity of Dominican friars, belonging to a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary, styled Delle Grazie.

The monastery is destroyed; the church is nothing; you pass it by; the refectory, or dining-hall, where the picture is, is nothing; the painting itself would not attract the attention of any one ignorant of the art. I do not wonder that the French soldiery selected the place for a stable; nor that they promoted it, in process of time, to the rank of a barrack for foot soldiers. Imagine yourself led into a large apartment with lofty plastered walls; the door in the centre, like a parish school; the windows high, and irregularly placed, but pretty large; the flat walls painted of a grey colour; the ceiling white-washed; the floor of the roughest flags; the place too small for barracks, of which it has greatly the aspect, and too vast and chilly for a school. At one end you find this picture, painted high upon these rude walls in fresco, the figures of the size of life, injured and discoloured, and the walls much damaged. Perhaps it will be expected that, in the next paragraph, I shall say, "Yet, even in circumstances so unpropitious, the Last Supper shone with splendour;" but no, it is like every spoiled fresco, a poor washy-looking thing, and I impartially declare, that I should hardly have discovered its beauties, and was forced to bring to recollection Mor-

ghen's superb engraving, not without some wonder in what state the painting could then have been, what copies he consulted, or by what means he made good his design.

The conception of the artist is the finest, the most awful and grand imaginable; and the moment he has chosen, the most interesting, the most calculated to excite all the various sensations of curiosity, pain, wonder, and horror; it is when our Saviour says, "One among you shall betray me."

The picture is now nearly lost, and all its beauty gone; and this is principally owing to the whimsical theories Leonardo had conceived in the composition, and manner of laying on his colours. He is reported to have been occupied sixteen years in this painting; the chief part of which time was, I doubt not, employed in experiments more properly chemical; and, after having tried and rejected many materials, he at last finished the picture in oil, on a ground composed of pitch, mastic, and plaster, combined with some fourth ingredient, and wrought with heated iron; an invention probably altogether his own, but which was afterwards used by Sebastiano del Piombo. Over this preparation he laid his fresco, a cement of burnt clay and ochre, which, being mixed up with varnish, formed a colouring of great beauty, but short duration.

The precise period when Leonardo commenced this great work is not correctly ascertained; but it is supposed to have been towards the beginning of the year 1495. He began by forming a general plan of the whole, which (with many other valuable productions of his) is unfortunately lost. He next proceeded to make separate sketches of the heads, of which two are still in existence, one in the possession of Prince Lichtenstein, and the other purchased, a century ago, by an Englishman. A painting on a subject of such deep interest, and by an artist so eminent, could not fail to inspire the liveliest feelings among his friends and contemporaries; but curiosity and enthusiasm, to whatever height they might have arisen, had no remedy but patience; for, though this object constantly held the first place in the thoughts of Da Vinci, sixteen years elapsed before it was finally accomplished. Bernardo Zenale, on his expressing the difficulty of giving to the countenance of our Saviour a divine beauty and excellence, superior to that which he had already attained in those of some of the Apostles, particularly of St John, recommended him to follow the example of the celebrated Grecian artist, and leave the work unfinished; with which advice, according to one author (Lanazzo), he complied; but this statement is entirely contradicted by every other writer.

The description of the whole composition, given by

Cardinal Frederic Borromeo, breathes all the fervour of a feeling mind, warmed to enthusiasm by admiration; and this is the language which is held by all the professors and authors of the day.

In a public recitation, held by Antonio Massi, at Pavia, rather more than a hundred years since, he says, "Inimitable beauty shone in the Saviour's countenance, blended with a character of deep and touching melancholy, expressive of celestial pity; a countenance on which the eye rested with awe, love, and admiration; while all the emotions of the mind, tenderness, anxiety, suspense, or fear, might be read in the varied aspects of the Apostles. The mild and effulgent beauty of St John was relieved by the stronger and more dignified physiognomy of St Peter, whose features, on which truth and zeal were pourtrayed, were finely contrasted by the haggard visage, dark scowling eye, wild disordered looks, and sunk cheek of Judas Iscariot, who is represented, with the jealous suspicion characteristic of guilt, to be listening to the discourse of St Peter." During the progress of the work, the artist, as may easily be imagined, was assailed by the curiosity, or annoyed by the impatience, of those who surrounded him. It is reported, in particular, that the Prior, worn out with expectation, at length complained to the Duke, who, inquiring into the matter from Leonardo himself, was assured by him,

that he devoted two hours daily to the painting; and this answer being satisfactory, the Prior was dismissed. But returning to the Duke some months after, and with additional ill humour, he protested, that during the intervening period, not a line had been added, or brush applied; upon which assertion, Ludovico again had recourse to Da Vinci, who explained, in language so eloquent and clear, the necessity of study and contemplation to mature his ideas on a subject so august, that the Duke was not only convinced, but charmed with the powers of mind displayed in his discourse; and from that time none dared to interfere. Leonardo was said to have revenged himself on the Prior, by making use of his countenance to represent Judas.

It would be a long matter to enumerate the variety of accidents that have combined to ruin this celebrated picture, and those occurring at a period so shortly following its completion, as to render it a subject of wonder, as well as a proof of the exquisite beauty it had once possessed, that its fame has been carried through so many ages. Two circumstances have especially contributed to preserve it to posterity; the admiration of contemporaries, who delighted in copying a favourite subject, and the diligence, taste, and talents of Morghen; and to these may be added, in the third place, the order, in the year

1796, by which Buonaparte prohibited the use of the hall any longer as a barrack.

In little more than fifty years after this painting was finished, it was found to be almost wholly destroyed. In the year 1726, it was repaired by Michael Angelo Bellotti, a presumptuous, but a good artist; and although, according to the assertion of some, his success was owing to a secret skill in renewing the colours, I should rather conjecture, that his art was that of re-painting. At a later period, Giorgione was solicited to re-touch the picture, a task which he modestly declined. In the year 1772, they found a painter less diffident, Muzza, who nearly accomplished the utter destruction of this admirable piece. He boldly brushed off the surface of the painting wherever it interrupted his progress, laying a new ground of paste, mastic, burnt umber, and ochre, on the parts which he meant to repair. He had nearly finished the whole; St Thomas, Matthias, and Simon, alone were left untouched; and they were in the course of execution, when a new Prior (Paul Galloni) saved them from his barbarous hands. In the year 1797, Beauharnois, at that time Viceroy of Milan, ordered the refectory to be repaired, and defended the picture, by the erection of a low wooden gallery, on which the spectator is placed to view it.

AMBROSIAN LIBRARY.

One of my first objects, on the morning after my arrival at Milan, was to visit the Ambrosian Library, which is esteemed one of the most valuable and extensive in Italy, being said to contain 60,000 volumes, and 16,000 MSS. It is impossible to visit objects of this nature without a feeling of regret, in being obliged to take only a passing glance; yet, in merely surveying such institutions, something may be gained, were it only gleaned from the conversation of the learned professors; the politeness and courtesy of their general manner was such as to lead them to take not merely pleasure, but apparently, even a pride, in attending to the visitors; evincing every solicitude to shorten their labours, and to give them every information in their power.

This tribute is well due to the learned institutions which I have visited in this elegant metropolis. The descriptions I had read of the college, its galleries, sculpture, and paintings, had given me a high idea of the edifice itself. I was, however, disappointed in the expectations I had formed. I looked for magnificent apartments, and princely halls; but I found them gloomy, the arches low and heavy, and the whole having a monastic

cloistered aspect, somewhat depressing, yet not unsuitable to a seminary of science.

In this short summary of the many interesting objects which are presented to the traveller in Milan, I must not omit the triumphal arch begun by Buonaparte, situated on the road leading to the Simplon, which is finely imagined. It is almost as colossal as the barriers of Neuilli, and infinitely more elegant than the Arch of the Carousal, the effect of which is much injured by its various colours, while this is composed of the purest white marble. The design, however, much exceeds the execution; the sculpture is indifferent, and the academic figures incorrect; some conspicuous defect being perceptible in each, either from the too great length of arms, flatness of chest, or disproportioned size of the head, but yet, although critically imperfect, the effect of the whole is very striking. None of the figures are grouped; they stand singly, and their forms are generally elegant. For the embellishments in the finishing of the structure, viz. friezes, cornices, capitals, and enrichments, there is a most splendid collection. But, like the Elephant at Paris, the whole stands encircled by a wooden railing, and its greatest use, probably, will be the producing a few francs a-day to the custode who shows it.

The Amphitheatre in the Piazzo di Castello, another work erected by Buonaparte, is also a splendid underta-

king. It is capable of containing 30,000 spectators; and although the whole is in an unfinished state, naumachiæ or naval conflicts have been represented, and, upon two occasions, witnessed by himself. I am told, that it was his intention to renew the exhibition of gymnastic exercises, for which preparations had already been made, in the training of youths for the games of the Circus and Arena.

Among the many public institutions in Milan, the Brera, a university originally instituted under the superintendance of the Jesuits, and bearing the name of Santa Maria in Brera, may be distinguished as an object of high interest, embracing an extensive circle in the arts, and in the various branches of knowledge. The whole plan is established on such a system of liberality, as must, when accomplished, do great honour to the city; but, as yet, a considerable part of the arrangements are only in progress. The apartments forming the gallery of pictures are large and beautiful, and the collection valuable. Of these, however, I shall mention only two or three, which seem to me the most interesting. Abraham sending away Hagar, by Guercino, a composition of much expression. I stood long gazing on this very beautiful picture, full of nature and feeling. The piece is composed of the Patriarch, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael, whom she is leading towards the desert; she has left her home,

and is on her way, but looking back to Abraham. Her eyes, reddened by the traces of tears, are fixed upon him with a sadness so deep, an expression so mournful, of silent anguish, as is inexpressibly touching. In Abraham's countenance may be read a manly sorrow, suffering, enduring, yet submitting. In the further end of the picture, Sarah is seen watching the lingering steps of Hagar with a look of malignant joy. I shall mention also three exquisite paintings which particularly attracted my notice; a Crucifixion, by Scarpaccio, the imitator of Giorgione; the same subject, by Girolamo; and a Holy Family, by Battoni. The two first are executed in the finest style and manner, distinguished by a character grand, touching, and dignified, combined with the most affecting simplicity. A Holy Family by Battoni, I should rank next to these in merit. I must not omit a very fine painting by Vandyke; as also some beautiful pieces of game, by Frith.

CERTOSA.

We left Milan on the morning of the 5th of July, in weather hot, but not breathless, with a sweet refreshing breeze; and, passing through the gate of Pavia, by a barrier of singularly beautiful architecture, proceeded to-

wards that city, through a country rich and luxuriant beyond imagination. The fertility of the ground, watered by three fine rivers, the Ticino, the Po, and the Oloria, can hardly be exceeded by that of Egypt itself; and its vast produce may be said to owe its source to the same cause, irrigation being here regarded as an object of such importance, that the practice of it is enforced by law. The canal, along the side of which our road lay, was begun as early as the year 1400, by John Visconti, first Duke of Milan, but was completed only in 1816. It now reaches to the very gates of Pavia, forming at once a feature of great beauty in the landscape, and a source of vast riches to the country, affording the means of immediate conveyance for its produce. At the distance of five miles from Milan, leaving the direct road, we struck into an avenue, shaded by stately trees, leading to the Certosa, supposed to be at once the largest and the most magnificent of the Carthusian monasteries in Italy. This edifice was built by Galeazzo Visconti, Duke of Milan, being an *ex-voto*, erected in fulfilment of a vow made by his wife. In the year 1476, he laid the first stone, accompanied by a gallant train of nobles and citizens, and with no less than twenty-five architects, and an equal number of statuaries. The building, however, notwithstanding the ardour thus displayed in its commencement, was not completed till after the lapse of 200

years. The length of the church is 200 paces, the width 100, and the whole presents a rich and magnificent exterior. Above the great gate, which is ornamented by basso relievos, executed in curious marbles, stand the statues of the Angel Gabriel and the Virgin Mary, and in a higher circle, that of the Heavenly Father, with those of four of the Prophets, enriched by beautiful arabesques, solely the invention of Bernardino di Lanino, or Lupino,* a Milanese artist. The basso relievos, the busts, statues, and enrichments of the front, are all of the 15th century, and fine. On first entering this edifice, the eye rests on the high altar, which, supported by pillars, and ascended by a flight of marble steps, is placed in the great *duomo* of the church, screened by a splendid bronze railing, the choir, supported by marble statues, closing the view; the whole effect of which is truly magnificent. There are seventeen chapels, each having a superb brazen gate; and the walls are painted in fresco, with altar pieces, many of which are good, executed in oil. The basements and pavement are formed of curious marbles, many portions being exquisitely finished in pietra dura, and even precious stones, formed into mosaic festoons and wreaths, imitative of fruits and

* Stated by Lomazzo to be a Milanese artist, but by some others, particularly Gaudenzio Terrase di Valduggio, a native of Vercelle, in Piedmont.

flowers, and finished with great beauty and elegance. Over the gate, in the interior, the Assumption, a painting by Procacci, is well executed; and on each side, eight pillars support as many colossal statues, projecting into the body of the church. This I mention, as giving some idea of the spaciousness of the building, and the richness of its ornaments. The treasures carried off during the Revolution are said to be almost beyond belief. Statues, crucifixes, chalices, &c. &c., in massive gold and silver, besides gems and precious stones of great value.

It was here, in the month of February, in the year 1525, that Francis the First was received after the disastrous battle of Pavia. He entered the church, and found the priests singing a portion of the Psalms, which described, it is said, his own lost condition. He repaired to the convent, attended by the monks, and there, soon after, yielded himself prisoner to the Connêtable de Bourbon, who commanded for Charles the Fifth. The park which surrounded the Certosa, divided from it by a court, was, at that period, of vast extent, reaching nearly to the walls of Pavia, and devoted by the Visconti to the hunting of the wild boar; and there it was that this memorable battle was fought.

PAVIA.

Pavia, which we did not reach till towards the close of evening, is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Ticino, and in the centre of all that is most rich and luxuriant in nature. The fields are often seen bearing three crops at once: the mulberry, affording sustenance to the silk-worm, is thickly planted in equal rows; the vine, trained along, and borne up by the despoiled tree, spreads its shivering branches with thick leaves and clustering grapes, which form rich festoons, carried from space to space, while the whole ground below is covered with the finest grain. The approach to the city, in particular, is fine, the road spacious, well causewayed, and shaded on either side by large and spreading trees, the whole, as you advance, seeming to announce the entrance into some important city. But here the deception ceases; Pavia, once the seat of learning, the first among the cities of Italy for her schools and universities, as much distinguished for her population as for the revelries and courtly festivals held within her walls, now appears silent and deserted. You survey her decayed fortifications and fallen battlements, look on the boding

aspect of her gloomy Gothic towers, crumbling into ruins,—all present signals of desolation, most painful and depressing. The city is of considerable extent; but the population is scanty, the shops mean, many houses unoccupied, the doors of some of the churches nailed up, while portions of buildings and porticos, formerly belonging to them, are converted into barracks for cavalry. The university of Pavia is supposed to have existed as early as the year 794, having owed its first establishment to Charlemagne. It is amazing how soon a college may rise to distinction, and in how short a period it may fall into decay; only thirty years since, Pavia was the first school for law and physic. This may be said to be the sort of body politic which the soonest rises, and soonest perishes, since its fame often depends upon the life of one man, and dies with him. Perhaps Pavia herself may shortly give proofs of the truth of this observation. I have reason to believe that she may again, in no long period, rise to her former celebrity. Such, at least, is the language held by the scientific men of this city, with whom I enjoyed a short conversation, while in the company of the venerable and distinguished man, (Scarfa,) who has such claims to admiration, not only from his brethren of the same profession, but from all who value science; nor shall I easily forget the feelings of

gratification which my interview with him left on my mind.*

Impatient to form a distinct idea of this ancient city, and to prepare for my morning's observations, I sauntered forth, partly leaving my course to chance. In entering Pavia, I had observed a ruined, although modern gate, situated close to a castle of great extent, with four vast brick towers, once guarding the ramparts. I had marked the solitude and melancholy aspect of the spot, and wishing to view it more nearly, proceeded now, in the decline of day, through the dusky and dismal streets of the city, in pursuit of this object. It was growing dark, the shops were shut, no light appeared in any quarter, nor was any footstep heard save that of the sentinel. I perceived that I had missed my way to the old castle, but I found myself opposite to a structure, which (at least when seen in this dim light) seemed

* In the anatomical school of Pavia I remarked a singular circumstance, and one which very much excited my attention: I saw four or five skulls belonging to that unfortunate race of beings denominated Cretins, the idiots of the Savoyard mountains. On examination of these skulls, I found them to be wonderfully thick, and all of them depressed at the great occipital hole, as if the head, being too heavy, had pressed too hard upon the *alba*; the skulls are, at the same time, extremely large, and the whole head and bone have this most unusual thickness. On careful inquiry, I found that these symptoms constantly prevailed, never failing to appear the same in every particular. In so much, therefore, as regards the Cretins being idiots, the cause is explained, although I have never, upon any occasion, heard of this circumstance being noticed.—*Note by the Author.*

worthy of examination. The effect presented was that of the entrance into a deep cave; on proceeding a few steps, however, into the interior, I perceived, from the rushing sound of water underneath, that I was traversing a covered bridgeway, the canopy overhead being supported by low pillars, placed at distant intervals. Through these arches I paused to view a prospect in itself most striking, but rendered still more so from the obscurity of the spot on which I stood. Several vessels lay in deep shade, dark and gloomy below; the moon was just risen, so as to throw a soft tempered light over the landscape, yet leaving the heavens and the milky way in all their starry splendour; not a breath was stirring, the heat was intense, and from time to time the forked lightning coursed along the horizon, passing from one light cloud to another, without approaching the earth; while in its short transit the electric fluid for a moment dimmed the stars, leaving them again glowing and bright. The broad river, pure and lucid as a mirror, lay stretched out as far as the eye could reach, and the rush of its deep waters added to the grandeur and solitude of a scene, the beauty of which I shall never forget. This bridge, styled the bridge of Pavia, serves as a public walk, and is roofed over, to protect the passenger from the mid-day sun. It was erected in the fourteenth century, to connect the city with the suburbs

on the opposite side. It is constructed partly of marble, but chiefly of brick; and is long, straggling, and most inelegant. But the Ticino, which it crosses, is truly grand, rapid as the Rhone, and green as the sea, with beautiful banks, and interspersed with little islands.

The general aspect of Pavia is desolate and mean; but some of its public edifices are well deserving of notice. The Borromean College, founded by St Charles Borromeo, is a superb institution. It is situated on an acclivity, the front rising conspicuous above a mass of wretched brick buildings. The entrance is by a gate, through which you pass into a court of about 150 feet square, encircled with arches supported by pillars, and on a second set of arches and pillars rising above these, the gallery is built. The refectories and dormitories occupy the ground-floor, while the great hall of the college is on the second. This apartment, which is 80 feet in length, with a well-proportioned width, and 20 feet in height, is particularly distinguished by a ceiling of fine architecture, adorned with beautiful emblematical paintings in fresco. The figures of Zeal, Labour, Silence, Prayer, Religion, Piety, and Perseverance, are finely conceived, and the tone of colouring deep, rich, and effective. They are the work of Cesare Nebia, and are said to be all that remains of his paintings; which, from the beauty of these specimens, is to be regretted. In one of the squares of

the roof, the birth of St Charles Borromeo is represented, and in another, the same saint carrying the holy nail on occasion of the great plague at Milan. This last painting, in particular, is very fine. The long-drawn procession of priests, penitents, halbert-bearers, &c. forms the centre of the back-ground, while the pale, the sickly, the dead, and dying, occupy the front, presenting a touching and mournful picture of suffering and death. Both of these pieces are by Lucchese. But in my review of this apartment, perhaps my most pleasing sensations arose from the contemplation of the beautiful prospect presented from its noble windows. The distant view is bounded by the green hills of Savoy, while the eye rests with inconceivable delight on the cool refreshing aspect of the waters of the Ticino, which almost wash the walls of the College, and are seen spread below, and coursing through the richly-wooded grounds which cover the banks of the river.

From this I proceeded to take a view of the Papal College, founded by Pope Pius the Fifth, a structure of much grandeur. The court is spacious, and the arcades, supported in the usual style by columns, are wide and lofty. In the centre of this court stands a colossal statue of the founder, in bronze, a work of considerable merit. The posture and action of the Pontiff, who is represented with his hand raised in the act of blessing the

establishment he has founded for high and holy purposes, is most dignified. I have always thought the sacerdotal habit, when finely treated, peculiarly propitious to grandeur of effect. The toga of the Roman Lawgiver is too spare to be graceful; the round form that marks the costume of the Roman General is too formal, cutting the figure across at the knee; while the cap, the crozier, the square sandal, the flowing robe, and the rich and belted fringe of the scarf, or scapula, offer materials for the finest composition.

At the left hand, in the entrance of the great staircase, there is another statue of the founder. This is in marble, and the Pontiff is here seated, and still expanding his right hand, as in the act of benediction. The figure is fine, and the accompaniments beautifully executed. The cushion on which the feet rest is well expressed, and the base of the pedestal, surrounded by cherubs' heads, produces a singular and rich effect. But the beauty of this fine statue is greatly injured, if not totally destroyed, by the very unfavourable situation in which it is displayed.

We left Pavia at an early morning hour, in the midst of a thunder-storm, often so beautiful and so grand in these countries. Our road, lined by large and spreading trees, which almost meet over the traveller's head, lay through a finely-wooded country, luxuriant and pictu-

resque at every turn. The storm, as we proceeded, continued to rage with increased violence; high in the horizon the sky might be seen clear and blue, but overhead rolled dark muddy clouds, opening at sudden intervals, with flashes of lurid clear white lightning; the thunder broke in tremendous peals, and the boughs of the tall trees bent and cracked under the fury of the blast; when, suddenly, through the arches formed by their branches, we beheld spread out before us, the noble stream of the Po. At this point the river is crossed by a long bridge of boats, and being darkened by the green of the rich wood hanging on its banks, lay so flat below the end from which we entered, that as we sat, under torrents of rain, in the carriage, we seemed to tower over a wide expanse of water, so deep, so broad, that it could hardly be distinguished from a great lake; while the bridge, which shook under the dashing of the storm, appeared as if it moved along. The whole effect was most singular and striking. The Po, as we now beheld it, agitated by the influence of the elements, was inexpressibly grand.

On leaving Pavia we had formed the resolution of changing the direction of our course, in order to visit Genoa, a city I had passionately longed to see; but considerations of health rendered it necessary to avoid delay.—We went as far as Voghera, travelling through

beautiful mountain scenery, near the hills on which the lightning had fallen in the late storm; after which, with only the advantage of having seen a little more of the country, (and not much, for our mules seldom forsook a walking pace,) partly retracing our steps, we proceeded towards Placentia, which we reached at a late hour in a beautiful evening.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

PLACENTIA—CATHEDRAL—PARMA—PAINTINGS IN THE ACADEMY—ROUTE TO BOLOGNA—MODENA—BOLOGNA—ACADEMY—PALACES—CATHEDRAL—CHURCH OF ST DOMINICK—APPROACH TO FLORENCE.

PLACENTIA.

A REFRESHING breeze had succeeded to the oppressive heat of an intensely warm day; the low declining sun, now setting behind the hills, cast a lengthened shadow over the landscape, and gave a pleasing variety to unwooded but rural and richly-cultivated scenery. It was Sunday, and the streets of the city were filled with well-dressed people, most of whom, especially the women, were tall and handsome. There were no carriages; no crowding or bustling in the streets; the whole presenting a character of quiet serenity, which pleasingly reminded me of the Sabbath of a long summer day in a country town of Scotland. Placentia, or Piacenza, is finely situated on a great plain, between the Po and the

Trebia, not far from the junction of these two rivers, having received this appellation from the Romans, on account of its delicious situation.

Placentia has nothing of the grandeur of an ancient city; neither does it offer any of the finer features of modern structures; but may be described as presenting a pretty and cleanly aspect, giving the idea of a small town, in which nothing of the bustle of trade appears; and where much of simplicity and equality in manner and station is to be found. On entering it, we are particularly struck with the fresco paintings displayed on its walls, but are more frequently to be seen under the arcades. They immediately attract the attention, more especially because it is in Placentia that we first view works in this style, executed by masters of note. Those adorning the outside of the houses are the labours of Fratti, Campo, Camilla, and Alonzo. The houses are chiefly built with brick, and the streets narrow, but not irregular.

In one of the squares, styled Piazza di Castello, there are two equestrian statues of bronze, by some attributed to John of Bologna Fiammingo, but rather believed to be the work of his pupil, Moca. One of the statues represents Alexander Farnese, the other is that of his son, Ranuccio. On the pedestal of this last, there is an inscription, in which he is styled the just, the renowned, and the pa-

tron of arts, and of industry—high-sounding claims to distinction, which are, however, singularly contradicted by historical facts. This prince, avaricious and cruel by nature, became, it is said, gloomy and ferocious, through remorse for having murdered his grandfather, Louis Farnese. He sheltered himself from the consequences of this act by a successful crimination of many great lords of the state, seven of whom suffered in consequence of his pretended charges. He pursued his victims with such severity, that, not content with depriving the children of these nobles of their inheritance, he threatened their lives, and they were saved only by the humanity of the priests, who secretly conveyed them beyond the reach of his power. Such is the violation of truth in the virtues we here find proclaimed.

These equestrian statues, as works of art, are mentioned in terms of the highest praise. I am tempted, however, to observe, that the strength and power exhibited in the form of the neck, with the fire expressed in the head and eye of Ranuccio's courser, are sadly counteracted by the mountain of flesh on the shoulders and hips of the animal. The artist seems to have believed, that bulk and grandeur were synonymous; or, guided by the sublime figurative expression, his "neck is clothed with thunder," he has given the starting eye-ball, nostrils breathing fire, and flying mane; but loaded the

hinder parts with sides and haunches of unmeaning weight and dimensions. All that is good in these works, the head, ear, eye, and neck, possess those obvious characters of beauty, which are always in evidence, and therefore easily represented; but we find no swell in the muscle of the thigh; the feet are flat, and motionless; no setting off of the heel; none of the indications of the strength of muscle requisite to motion. The spine, the hip, and hinder limbs, have a claim on the study of the artist, less apparent, indeed, and less imposing, but, nevertheless, equally essential to the formation of a noble war-horse.

CATHEDRAL.

The cathedral of Placentia, after being destroyed by fire, was rebuilt in the twelfth century, and is in an antique style. The interior possesses all the imposing solemn effect arising from space; it is more than usually lofty, and the duomo, in particular, is very grand.

This church is more especially interesting from the fresco paintings of Guercino, Caracci, and other masters, with which it is enriched, and which are in general highly esteemed. Placentia, as I have already noticed, is the first place where this style of painting is present-

ed to the traveller who enters Italy from the north; which, together with the high name of the masters, whose works these frescoes are, has no doubt had considerable effect in influencing opinion. Such artists have indeed great claims to our deference, yet I can praise only what I feel to possess merit; and I own I experienced a sensation of disappointment in viewing these paintings, in the general effect of which my expectations were by no means realized. Among the excellencies of which fresco painting is peculiarly susceptible, the facilities it presents of giving an easy flow, a freedom of hand, and roundness of contour, together with a richness and brilliancy of colouring, are chiefly remarkable. The larger portion, however, of this collection, is totally wanting in these points, the outline being frequently harsh, the draperies voluminous, and the tone of colouring sombre, without any of that freshness or beauty of tint, which forms the best character of this style of painting. The ceiling of the cupola, by Guercino, is divided into compartments, in each of which is an evangelist with angels hovering round him. These groups are finely executed; and the tone of colouring is good. Below this the space is occupied by lesser angels forming the frieze; and still lower are figures representing sibyls. The symbolical representations of Virtue, Mo-

desty, Humility, and Charity, occupy the groins, or corners, from which rises the great cupola.

These are the paintings of Franceschini; their heavy forms rise to a gigantic height, and carry a due proportion of voluminous drapery to cover this expanse of body and limb. Near to these, are Moses and Aaron, by Caracci, also coarse and ungraceful figures, incorrect in drawing, and without dignity.—There are also three paintings by Procaccini, the Assumption of the Virgin, David playing on the harp, and St Cecilia on the violoncello, which are generally mentioned with distinction.

The great altar-piece of the Cathedral, an oil painting by Procaccini, representing the death of the Virgin, is fine, but so dark and dingy as to render the figures almost invisible, and having been carried away in the time of the revolution, it suffered so much, and is altogether so dirty, and even torn, that it is difficult to judge of its merits. In one of the chapels there is an excellent picture by the same artist, representing St Martin giving his cloak to the beggar; the figures of the saint and the beggar are finely executed, and the horse is admirable, a Vandyke horse. But in this composition we find the same style of colouring prevail, a cindery, dull red, mixed with black; the whole so dark as to render the objects almost unintelligible. In another of these chapels there is a very fine picture, repre-

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senting St Catherine, the child, and St Girolamo, a copy from Parmegiano; the original, brought back from Paris, being in Parma. In a small side chapel I found a Holy Family, an admirable picture, believed to be by Caracci, although this is uncertain. The child is represented asleep, Mary putting her finger on her lip, as a token of silence to John the Baptist, while Joseph is seen in the back ground reading. This subject, so often repeated, and treated with such various degrees of excellence, ever possesses a singular charm, presenting a character of domestic simplicity infinitely touching. The journey, or flight,—the care of Joseph, Mary's gentle aspect, her maternal solicitude, the Ass, and all the combining circumstances indicating flight and banishment,—have always produced in my mind a peculiar feeling of tenderness and softened melancholy.

On the opposite side to this there is a painting representing St Francis after death; he is lying surrounded by angels, ready to receive his soul; a mournful and fine picture; the foreshortening of the hand of the saint, in particular, is admirable.

In a side altar there is an oil painting, by Sacchi, representing our Saviour appearing to the two disciples, also good; but the hand of our Saviour, forming a sort of triangle with those of the disciples, comes so near as seemingly to join them, and occasions a confusion very

injurious to the effect of the picture. The fresco painting of the ceiling of this chapel, by Caracci, of the resurrection, is beautifully composed, and finely executed. In the choir of the Cathedral there are two paintings; one on either side, of 20 feet in height, the work of Laland, a young artist of Placentia, who had studied long in Rome. These spaces were formerly occupied by superb paintings, by Caracci, carried to Paris during the revolution, and now in Parma. Laland was permitted to select for this work any scriptural subject most pleasing to himself, or best suited to his talents; but probably his mind, fixed by the recollections of the exquisite beauty of the pictures of Caracci, boldly resolved on repeating the same. Like Phaeton, he was nothing doubting; and, although his end was not as tragical, his defeat (if he were conscious of it) must have been as mortifying. The subject of the first of these pictures, is the death of the Virgin; angels are strewing flowers over her body, while the apostles are seen weeping and mourning. The other represents the approach of the apostles to the tomb of Christ after the resurrection. There is in these works both a bulkiness of drawing, and a power of composition, which is imposing, but with this great fault, that there is no pencilling. In order to preserve the general effect, the colours are left broad, flat, and unwrought. The Virgin is finely

drawn, and the grouping of the angels beautiful; but the other figures reminded me of Gil Blas's robbers in the cave,—dark, grim, and ferocious. The other picture has still less merit; the figures of the apostles are old and mean. In both pieces, with much inaccuracy of drawing, there is a total absence of dignity or grandeur. But, nevertheless, such is the effect produced by the mass of colours, the size, and the subjects, that on a cursory view they seem to have possessed sufficient merit to obtain considerable reputation, as well as the praise of several writers, in particular of Mons. Millin, whose eulogium pronounces, that for grandeur of style, and beauty of design, the artist of these works deserves to rank high in the schools of Lombardy.

The walks round Placentia are very interesting; its rivers, in particular, are very fine: the Trebia sometimes covers a space of no less than five miles, as may be seen from the immense width of the channelly bottom, exposed to view, in the summer season, when its waters are reduced to a narrow stream. At no great distance from the city there is a narrow mountain, three hundred feet high, curious for the fossils found in it.

PARMA.

After passing one whole day at Placentia, we proceeded on our journey. and travelling through the same luxuriant and lovely country, reached Parma at an early hour.

This city, receiving the name of Parma from the Romans, either because its form resembled that of a shield, or, perhaps, because it had served as a protection to them, was, together with Placentia, among the cities left by Charlemagne to his son Pepin. The distance of these towns from the seat of government rendered revolt easy, and they soon erected themselves into independent republics. After this period, they belonged sometimes to the Duke of Milan, sometimes to the Pope; then becoming the property of the Ferranese, this family long reigned over them with the title of Dukes of Parma. Parma was next possessed by the French, in their revolutionary conquests; and, finally, at the Congress of Vienna, was assigned to the Arch-Duchess Maria Louisa, wife of Buonaparte. In contemplating Italy, its beautiful cities, valleys, and rich plains, we cannot wonder that it has so often been an object of contention, and an alluring prize to the conqueror's arm. But it must excite astonishment, that a country having

sea-ports to favour trade, vast rivers to open canals, a climate so beautiful, so temperate, possessing the sources of all that is most valued, as well as most refined, in life, presenting at once all the luxuries of art and nature, with such means to obtain power, and such objects to stimulate exertion, should so long have suffered itself to be the sport of contending and conflicting nations. The French overran all Italy so easily, that they believed and styled themselves invincible; but they did not reflect, that their arms were directed against those who had long forgotten to contend for their rights, a nation become more zealous to preserve tranquillity than to assert independence.

Parma is finely situated on the banks of the small river of the same name, that falls into the Po, at the distance of eight or ten miles below. The streets, which are in various places connected by bridges crossing the stream, are wide and regular for an Italian city. The approach is picturesque and pretty; as you advance along the public road, you distinguish, as in a lengthened vista, the turrets and steeples of the city, connected by low, square, flat-roofed buildings, the intervals between being filled up by the rich dark green foliage of fine full-leafed trees, yielding a pleasing and refreshing relief to the eye. Entering by one of the gates, you cross the river, passing along an antique stone bridge,

and proceed through cleanly, solitary streets, towards the principal square of the city, which is large and handsome. Parma is said to contain 28,000 souls, but neither its magnitude, nor its apparent population, gives this impression. There is no attempt at courtly grandeur, as at Turin; none of the stir and busy bustle of Milan; nor anything of the filth, meanness, and confusion of Pavia; but simply a beautiful little city, the general aspect of which is striking; the public walks, lying on the ramparts high above the town, are pleasant, as well as the roads around, which are lined with fine trees. One great and very handsome street extends from the square; there are others broad, but not continuous, and without any attraction of architecture. The ancient palace, a very extensive building, now forms a superb Library, an Academy of Arts, Sciences, and Gallery of Paintings. The theatre is vast, too vast for so small a place, as it would seem large even in Paris or London. The chief interest in this city, however, arises from the fine paintings it contains; Parma being more especially styled the city of Correggio, from the celebrated works of that great master, with which it is richly adorned. This artist, whose family name was Allegri, styled Lieto in the Latin epitaph inscribed on his tomb-stone, was born in the year 1494, and closed his life shortly after attaining his fortieth year. He is re-

ported to have been of a melancholy temperament, laborious in study, modest even to humility, and of so mild a nature, that while his contemporaries were writhing under the feelings of envy excited by his fine talents, his spirit was undisturbed, their enmity towards him having no power to move his placid and unassuming nature. It is positively asserted that he never visited Rome, and consequently did not enjoy the advantage of drawing from the antique statues. This seems, however, almost impossible; for at that period we find this study regarded as indispensable, and as forming the only pathway to excellence. Correggio directed his attention particularly to the art of foreshortening, in which he was singularly successful. It was his particular care always to draw from nature.

Of the many fine paintings executed by this great master, esteemed the inventor of his style, so remarkable for his foreshortenings, the bold relief in his drawing, and the easy flow of his draperies, the work which first raised his name to distinction is the fresco painting of the cupola, or dome, of the Cathedral of Parma. The subject is the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, who is seen ascending into Heaven, surrounded by innumerable angels; the foreground being occupied by the Apostles and Saints. This celebrated work, which raised Correggio's fame so high, was finished in his thirty-se-

cond year. In the churches of this city, there are many fine fresco paintings by this artist, as well as by other masters; but in the few hasty remarks which my short stay enabled me to make, my observations were more particularly directed to the works contained in the Gallery and Academy of Sculpture and Painting, which, with the Library, are under one roof. In the last mentioned, we find Correggio's fine painting, representing the Coronation of the Virgin by St John.

Leaving this, I proceeded to the Academy of Arts and Sciences; and now propose merely to point out a few of the most striking or interesting pictures it contains. On entering this apartment, one of my first objects was to obtain a view of Hannibal Caracci's two celebrated paintings, from which Laland's pictures in the Cathedral of Placentia had been designed, the recollection of which, as might easily be imagined, only served to heighten the beauty of the originals. There is in the composition and execution of these, a character of grandeur, mingled with a tone of deep and solemn melancholy, inexpressibly touching. The figures are gigantic; but here we find size without coarseness, giving only greater nobleness to the form. The Virgin lies on a bier borne by the Apostles, and carried so high as partly to conceal their grief; the cloak of one of them covers her form; her eyes are closed, while her matron-like coun-

tenance is seen pale and still, yet beautiful even in death. Angels, hovering over her, are represented scattering flowers, and waving censers. The whole beauty and interest of the piece, however, rests in the main subject, in the Virgin's countenance, in her form, as she lies on the bier, in the fine representation of death, and in the solemn grandeur expressed in the manner and attitude of the Apostles:—the forms of the angels are wanting in aerial transparency; the figures also are too distinct; no bright halo illumines to give distance, no light clouds produce that softening hazy medium, so beautiful in the representation of the ascending and disappearing of angels, as they rise into Heaven.

The piece, however, as a whole, is very fine. The companion to this painting, which represents, as I mentioned in describing the copy, the approach of the Apostles to the tomb of Christ, and their dismay on finding it unoccupied, is not so good: in this there is no story distinctly told, an object of the first importance in composition; nor any point sufficiently prominent to excite or fill the mind. The figures of the Apostles are of gigantic size, and possess a considerable character of grandeur; but this does not produce such an effect as to compensate for the general want of interest in the design. This portion of Scripture is a history rather to be told, than represented; because you do not on the

first view immediately understand the subject, nor clearly comprehend the nature of the object engaging the attention of the Apostles. The figure of St John, who touches the linen partly hanging over the tomb, is by much the finest.

A picture by Correggio, a striking and beautiful piece. The Mother and Child are represented seated on the altar, and at their feet a St Cecilia with a violoncello; while St Peter, St John, and St Catherine, stand on either side of Mary. The composition and grouping is very masterly; the feelings and intentions of the surrounding figures being so finely expressed, that each bears a proportionate part; it is a tale told, not an unmeaning collection of figures, such as often fill the foregrounds of paintings in other respects good. The figure of St Cecilia, especially, is finely drawn, and the colouring of the whole rich and beautiful.

The Espousals of the Virgin, by Procaccini. This painting is executed in a most superb style. The canvass is filled, yet not crowded; the disposition of the groups, and the keeping of the whole, is admirable. The youthful but manly figure of Joseph, is contrasted by the softest expression of feminine beauty in Mary; while the characteristic simplicity of both is a fine relief to the gorgeous costume, and the dignified aspect and demeanour, of the high priest. The countenance of a

young woman, who is seen just behind the Virgin, is distinguished by a most touching sweetness, mingled with a grandeur of expression very striking; one of the group, standing behind Joseph, having his hands poised on his two thumbs, as he seems lost in the intensity of the fixed attention with which he regards the ceremony, although the posture is vulgar, is represented with a truth to nature singularly effective. In one corner of the painting, a child is seen playing with his mother's hand, and pushing it back, while she smiles upon him with an expression of the greatest tenderness.

The three Maries at the Sepulchre, a picture by Schidone; in a style so grand, so deep-toned, the figures so noble, the drapery so simple, and the expression so powerful, as to seize singularly on the imagination, producing an effect at once commanding and impressive, combining the highest elevation of sentiment with the most touching sorrow. The figure of the angel sitting on the tomb, is also fine; but the countenance is rather deficient in character.

La Madonna della Scala, a noble fresco painting, by Correggio, now framed, and carefully preserved.

The Descent from the Cross, by Hannibal Caracci; a celebrated and very fine picture. Our Saviour, taken down from the cross, is laid out in a reclining posture, while Mary is seen in the back-ground, fainting, and

sinking, surrounded by a group of angels; St Francis is standing a little below the body of our Saviour, with both his hands extended, pointing wildly and energetically towards his dead master; while Mary Magdalene is kneeling on the opposite side, with hands uplifted, and clasped in an agony of grief. The composition and execution of this piece are both in the first style of excellence. The drawing of the figure of our Saviour is at once the most learned in point of anatomy, and the truest to nature I have ever seen; the figures of the Virgin, and the angels in the back ground, are in such keeping, as not in any degree to intrude on the picture, but are beautiful, and very natural.

Another Descent from the Cross, by Schidone; superb indeed. Our Saviour, with the head turned towards the sepulchre, is laid and supported on the knee of St John; St Peter, bending over the body, is drawing the linen across to bind the wound; Mary, partly kneeling, is looking, with uplifted hands, from under the cloth; and Joseph, standing a little lower, with extended hand and finger, as if pointing towards the sepulchre, seen in the darker part of the picture, which presents a gloomy wild sky, and undefined landscape. The earnestness and interest of St Peter, while in the act of drawing the linen, with the mild and touching grief of Mary, are inexpressibly fine, as is the grand and prophetic figure of St John;

while the deepened tone of the horizon, its sombre hue, the indistinctness of the distance in the back ground, in which all seems silent and desolate, are very affecting. This, in my opinion, is the finest piece in the collection; the most powerful in expression, and the most agitating in its effects on the mind.

Proceeding in my review of the paintings in the Academy of Science, I entered into what is styled the Chamber of Correggio, containing four of his most celebrated paintings.

The first, named la Madonna della Scodella, from the vessel which she holds in her hand for drawing water, is one of the finest of all his compositions. The scene is the journey into Egypt; Mary is represented sitting with the child, her countenance bearing all that character of feminine loveliness, which Correggio so well knew how to display. Her drapery is of a yellowish pale colour, light and graceful; and the action of Joseph, who, with an extended arm, is taking hold of the child's hand, finely expressed.

The second is la Madonna di San Girolamo; and also most beautiful. The painting represents the Virgin sitting with the child on her knee, and Mary Magdalene at his feet, her countenance being raised towards him with an expression of lowliness, of love, and adoration, most forcibly and tenderly expressed; his hand is thrust

into her hair with playful infantine grace, while an angel on his left hand seems endeavouring to attract his attention. St Jerome, forming the balance of the group, stands on the other side. The colouring of this picture is very rich.*

The third is the martyrdom of Santa Placida, and her sister Santa Flavia. The colouring and painting of this piece are much finer than the composition. The whole is so ill conceived, and ill managed, and the subject of such a nature, that you cannot look on it with pleasure.

The fourth, the Descent from the Cross. The form of our Saviour, who lies supported on the lap of the Virgin, is very fine; the marble stillness, and silent resignation painted in Mary's countenance, over whose features the paleness of death seems fast approaching, is inexpressibly touching; and the figure of Mary Magdalene, who is kneeling, with clasped hands, in an agony of despair, at our Saviour's feet, is exquisitely drawn. The composition and expression of this group are, perhaps, among Correggio's finest works, but the other departments of the painting by no means equal these. The

* The original sketch of this painting, executed in the year 1524, is in the possession of an individual. It has been engraved by three artists, viz. Villamone, in the year 1586; by a Bolognese; and lastly, by Agostino Caracci.

two other Maries are vulgar ordinary figures; while the person who is coming down from the ladder does not seem to belong to the awful scene, and is in every respect quite out of keeping. I must observe also, that even in the figure of our Saviour, the whole is not perfect, the wound not being well represented, and one of the hands seeming contracted, as if to imitate a spasm; this effect, although not very prominent, must, nevertheless, be regarded as a fault, and at variance with the general character of such a representation.

In this room, we find a small picture, representing the Ascension, finely executed. Our Saviour is seated in the Heavens, with the Virgin and St John, one on either side; and St Paul and St Catherine in adoration below. The figure of St Paul is peculiarly majestic; the drapery richly coloured, and very beautiful; while the countenance of St Catherine is truly heavenly, painted with all that expression of sweetness and simplicity which characterizes true holiness.

The apartment more especially termed Correggio's chamber, is that of the Lady Abbess in the Abbey of St Paolo, which he painted in his twenty-fourth year. The subjects present a strange mixture of profane and sacred history, which at that period we find very common. The whole is in perfect preservation, and some portions very beautiful, especially the Diana, forming

the ornament of the chimney-piece; but there is nothing masterly, with the exception of the figures of the angels, which are well drawn, full, fleshy, and sweetly coloured.

Many of the paintings now filling this Academy and Gallery were, before the Revolution, to be found in the churches of the city.* Such of the paintings restored by France to Italy, as were not private property, are now chiefly to be found in the halls of public edifices, a measure of great importance, as tending to guard them against the danger of mouldering on dark damp walls, and to render them more useful as public property.

But as they have not been restored to their original destination, some time must elapse before a traveller can describe with certainty the position of the paintings now in Italy. Private collections, in consequence of a very general sale, must constantly be changing; in public halls, their final place is as yet hardly determined; and even where it is, these are frequently undergoing such repairs as to render their present habitation merely

* The French did not enter into this city as conquerors; for where blood is risked in conquest, booty is thought to be fairly won. In peace with the Duke of Parma, they entered his capital, laid the city under contribution, and carried off the pictures, with the science of picture-dealers, and all the deliberation of fair trade.—*Note of the Author.*

temporary. This last being the case in Parma, I have almost feared to give even these slight notices of the works I have visited; the paintings themselves, however, wherever found, must possess the same interest; many among them, as I have already mentioned, being very fine, especially the two superb paintings by Schidone, which, for expression and grandeur, are such as I hardly ever expeet to see surpassed.

Correggio was esteemed the first great master of the school of Parma of that period. Francesco Mazzuola, styled Parmegiano, the second; but the sweetness and grace of that artist is ascribed more to his study of Raffaelo, than to his imitations of Correggio. His famous work of the Adoration of the Magi, is held to be the finest of his pictures.

Among the works of art in this city, the fresco paintings by Hanibal Caracci, in the Palazzo Giardino, excite great interest. This residence, which is beautifully situated just beyond the walls of the city, was entirely pillaged during the period of the Revolution, and as we ascended fine stair-cases, and passed through noble apartments, we could only perceive how delightful it had been. Here we may say Caracci died, for here his labours ended; he was busied with these chambers, had finished all the designs, and had executed four superb

frescos, when he was taken ill and died, leaving what was yet unfinished to be completed by his pupils.

Of all the apartments that were adorned by this great master, that styled Caracci's Chamber, has alone entirely escaped the depredations of time and accident.

ROUTE TO BOLOGNA.

We left this pretty little city of Parma, with considerable regret, as there were many objects of interest, especially many fine paintings, which we had not visited. The early fall of night in the southern climates greatly adds to the difficulties of a traveller whose time is limited. We began our journey before the dawn, experiencing, just before daybreak, an unpleasant sharpness in the air. This I have observed invariably to be the case, whatever may have been the temperature of the preceding day, or the warmth of the earlier part of the night. It soon, however, passes away, to be succeeded by extreme heat, and vivid sunshine. In lower Italy, and in the broader parts of the great valley of Lombardy, the evening closes soft and still; the setting sun leaves a rich clear atmosphere, with low, bright, streaky clouds; no breath is stirring; but as you drive along, the effect of your own motion causes a balmy cool air to play

around you, which is sweetly refreshing; while the city, village, church, or convent, as they may chance to appear in view, are seen picturesquely contrasted with the rich flashes of purple in the fine yellow of the sky.

The road, in leaving Parma, composed of gravel, (as they generally are throughout all Lombardy, and this part of Italy,) is very fine. Rich as the country had hitherto appeared to us, it becomes here still more so; the stems of the vines are thicker, the grapes larger, and a character of stronger growth, and more luxuriant vegetation, is strikingly perceptible. The cities, villages, and small dwellings, are also much more numerous; the whole scenery presenting a most cheerful and populous aspect. At every short distance you may discern the turrets, or steeples, of the city, or village, rising from among the trees; while the face of the country is thickly covered with little dwellings, their white walls brightly reflected through the rich verdure, in which they seem to be embosomed. The habitations of the poorer class are pretty; and the farm-houses, with their small paddocks and enclosures, so cleanly, that an Englishman might imagine each to be an English cottage. The farms are so small as seldom to require more assistance than the labour of the farmer, his wife, and son, with one or two yoke of oxen. The cattle are not large; sometimes we see some stubborn-looking mules; few asses,

and no farm-horses. The grounds present little variety of culture; much black wheat; but no potatoes, or turnip; the aspect of the whole landscape resembling that of a finely-cultivated garden. The fields are prettily set with ranges of mulberry trees, planted in long rows, richly hung with the vine, the foliage of which is thickly gathered on the top; while festoons, extending from twelve to fifteen feet in length, hang from tree to tree, with heavy bunches of grapes, clustering in the centre, forming the festoons represented in ornamental paintings. I have observed the practice of treading out the corn by oxen to be universal in Italy: it is the mode least approved of, I believe; but, seen in the evening hour, when the heat of noon is past, and when, renovated by the freshened air, the spirit gives spring to thought and action, the little groups presented in this occupation have a singularly cheerful and primitive aspect. The serenity of the approach of night in these fine climates is most soothing; yet, so sudden is the fall of evening, that while we are just beginning to trace the rising stars, day is gone. But how beautiful, how grand, is the contemplation of nature at this hour! how splendid the spangled sky, how soft the milky way, clearly defined in its long course, as it lies spread out in the heavens! while, perhaps, from light clouds in the distant horizon, the harmless lightning plays, as if to mock

the fire-fly, which, rising from every spot deepened by foliage, soars and plies its busy wings, filling the air with incessant bright alternations of light and shade, and seeming to give life to the silence and stillness of night.

Another peculiarity in these plains is the prodigiously wide channels of the rivers formed by the winter torrents, presenting, at this season, an arid space, to the extent of many miles, of flat, broad, stony ground. Such is the Trebia as you approach Placentia; also the Taro, rising in Piedmont, and falling into the Po at Toricelli, the waters of which, sometimes filling a bed nearly six miles in width, are now reduced to a stream of a few yards.

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MODENA.

In the prosecution of our journey, towards mid-day, we reached Reggio, the birth-place of Ariosto, a small fortified city, lying on the Tessone: and from thence, passing through Ruberia, arrived at Modena early in the evening. The entrance into this city, the capital of the Duchy of Modena, is beautiful; the streets, lined with open arcades, are broad, elegant, and clean, especially the Strada Mastra, which is very striking; the general character of the architecture good; and many of the pa-

laces and public buildings very handsome. Modena has always been distinguished as the peculiar home and residence of princes of a domestic character, who loved and cherished the arts: of their taste in this respect, the Ducal Palace bears proof, being adorned by the works of the first masters, Tintoretto, Guido, Guercino, Andrea del Sacchi, &c. &c.; and the Gallery of Paintings, although not equal to what it once was, still presents many works of great merit. Correggio's celebrated Nativity, generally styled la Notte del Correggio;* a beautiful piece by Paul Veronese, so remarkable for the richness and power of his composition; with some other fine, though less distinguished paintings, formed a part of it. This charming little city, which is sufficiently large to be elegant, and yet small enough to have the delights of village walks near home, is finely situated, lying between the rivers Panaro and Secchia; while the

* There is a very interesting account of this picture in the Viaggio Pittorico, by which we find the work was originally designed for the church of San Prospero, in Reggio, where an acknowledgment by the artist, under the signature of Antonio Licto da Correggio, for the sum, amounting to something less than L.16 of our money, is carefully preserved. The chiaroscuro of this painting is pronounced, by Richardson, to be in the first class of excellence; and Lomazzo, in the fourth chapter of his Treatise on Paintings, mentions it as being one of the finest and most singular works in the world. Of two original designs of the subject, not, however, exactly alike, one is said to be in the possession of the Earl of Pembroke. This painting was first removed from the church of San Prospero to the gallery of the Duke of Modena, and from thence to Dresden.—*Note of the Author.*

innumerable brooks which water the ground, produce a remarkable freshness and richness in the verdure. The multiplicity of these springs and rivulets probably arises from the geological condition of the country, which appears to have been a vast lake, connected with the Mediterranean, of which the Lake of Mantua forms the only remains.

My short stay in this little city, which is interesting on so many accounts, afforded an opportunity for little more than a mere local survey of the surrounding objects. While thus engaged, I could not help remarking the uncommon beauty of the people; the women, in particular, seemed to possess a natural elegance of figure, combined with much flexibility of limb, and gracefulness of action. The artists of this city, I am told, take their designs from their fellow-citizens; and people, quite unconscious of any personal merit, often find themselves introduced into fine pictures. I have observed, that in each little district of Italy, in cities, perhaps divided only by thirty or forty miles, some little variation in expression, or in features, may be traced, although much of this is lost from the general uniformity of dress: I had looked to find, in different costumes, some mark of being in a foreign country; but, in this point, the French mode of dress is almost universal through all Northern Italy.

BOLOGNA.

Profiting by the freshness of morning, we left Modena early. As you approach nearer to the hills, the country becomes finely varied; and now, at the distance of six miles from the city, nothing can surpass the fertility and beauty of the surrounding scenery. Bologna is situated in a fertile valley, near the foot of the Appenines, and watered by the rivers Savena and Rheno, which last joins the Po by a canal; and thus it possesses at once all that is most luxuriant in nature, combined with all the facilities of trade. It is the second city in the Ecclesiastical State, and particularly distinguished by the honours conferred on its citizens, of whom no less than one hundred have been elevated to the purple, and ten to the tiara.

In the early struggles for liberty, it was the last that submitted to the Papal dominion, and yielded even then only a kind of feudal submission; the people still retaining the power of being governed by their own laws, levying their own taxes, electing their magistrates, and enjoying the privileges of republican independance; claims which, to this day, are fully secured to them. The approach to Bologna, which is peculiarly picturesque, differs in one respect from the more usual character of foreign cities, the great roads of which, in every

approach to a town, are uniformly lined with trees, generally forming a splendid avenue. Here, especially on the right hand, there are meadows of rich pasture-grounds; and the hills, exquisitely cultivated to the very top, are seen rising beyond the city; the intermediate country, finely wooded, is open; while the Rheno, crossed by a long flat stone bridge, is seen skirting the town, whose walls it encircles on the west. The ancient part of the city of Bologna is of considerable extent, and its streets narrow and tortuous; the buildings heavy and antique, without grandeur; the shops mean, and the arcades low. The whole impresses the traveller unfavourably; its aspect is gloomy; nor does it become more cheerful, when, passing through the principal square of that portion of the city, (where the statues by John of Bologna are placed,) he finds himself at the public prison; from the grated windows of which, long-bearded, dark-visaged prisoners are suffered to assail the passengers with the most clamorous outcries for charity. As you proceed, you are struck with the appearance of two isolated and shapeless brick towers, connected with no building, and without any apparent purpose. They are styled Asinilli, and Garisenda;* and are valued by

* These towers were erected in the year 1109, the name of the architect being preserved at the base of the one more entire. The inhabitants hold these ancient relics in great veneration; and they are at present undergoing a general repair.—*Note of the Author.*

the inhabitants for their antiquity, as giving effect in the distant view of the city, and from their hanging position, which is very singular. The first rises to more than three hundred feet, and inclines nearly four from the perpendicular line; the diameter of the second is much the greater, to which, probably, it once bore a proportionate height, but now it stands rather as a foil to its neighbour, being greatly thicker, and much lower; the inclination, however, is very remarkable, a stone dropt from the summit of this last falling nine feet beyond the base.

On forsaking this ancient portion of the city a very different scene is opened: broad streets, lined with magnificent arcades, noble palaces, monasteries, public halls, churches, the academy of painting, and houses of individuals. In the architecture of the colonnades, which offer so delightful a shade to the passenger, we may occasionally observe a whimsical indulgence of fancy, displaying capitals in every variety of form, with a studious endeavour that each should differ from the other; but the prevailing taste is chaste and good. Brick is much used in the buildings of this city; and in such climates it wears well, affording a fine quality of surface to receive the plaster, which in the preparation for fresco-painting is very important. The bricks for the pillars are cast in moulds, so that each forms a segment of a circle, and

several compose the shaft of the pillar. The floors of the arcades are paved either with flag-stone nicely prepared, or smoothly laid with brick. Some of the arcades (especially those leading from the theatre) are so broad, as easily to admit of ten or twelve persons walking abreast.

Many of the arches, as also the interior of the colonnades, are painted in fresco, some of which, executed in a most masterly style, are in the highest preservation. The custom of employing artists to paint the outside of buildings is very singular. How strange it seems to us, to imagine Procaccini, Guido, Caracci, &c., standing on a scaffold to ornament the house of perhaps the most ordinary individual!

The front of the ancient palace, in which the courts of justice are held, was once adorned by the most exquisite designs, in fresco, of the two last-mentioned artists, who on this occasion are said to have laboured to excel each other.

The possessions of this city (the school and birthplace of the Caracci, of Dominichino, Guido, and Albano,) in paintings of public and private property, are incalculable. Of late the latter has been considerably diminished by extensive sales, but the public collection contained in the Gallery of the Institute, may be regarded as being one of the finest in Europe. I shall shortly

notice those which appeared most deserving of attention.

THE ACADEMY OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE.

A very fine Descent from the Cross, by Cignani, sometimes styled Tiarini. The figures are considerably smaller than life, which might be supposed to hurt the general effect, but the composition is so perfect as to leave no feeling on the mind but that of admiration. The drawing and colouring of our Saviour's body are in such a style of excellence, as to give the most affecting expression to a representation generally so painful: his figure, forming the great central light of this touching picture, is stretched out with the finest truth of nature. It is the silent motionless rigidity of death, yet bearing a character full of interest, having nothing of the tame flat drawing and cadaverous colouring so frequently seen in this subject. The head and left hand are supported, while the right, which is drawn with exquisite skill, hangs down lifeless and stiff.

The Madonna del Rosario, by Dominichino. A very superb picture. The subject represented is that of St Gregory, the Pope, praying to the Virgin Mary in the Heavens to liberate the faithful from trouble and persecution on earth. The beseeching attitude of the saint, a

grand expanded melancholy figure with extended arms, as in a prayer that embraced all the world, is powerfully expressed, while the various sufferings of the Christian church are finely personified, and the figures composing the lower part of the painting admirably executed. The whole composition and expression of this picture may be ranked as standing in the first class.

In the hall of the Academy, a painting of Parmegiano, Guido's master, representing the Virgin in Heaven, surrounded by innumerable heads of angels, and below, St Michael, St John, Santa Catherina, and Apollione, in adoration. The colouring is fresh, beautiful, and deep-toned, and the shades of the drapery and dark sides of the figures finely wrought, but the composition is in a stiff elementary style, which, although admired by connoisseurs, is, in my opinion, wanting in grace and expression. The heads of the angels around the Virgin are as regular as a circle of a Gothic fringe above an arched door, and the figures below planted in the same spirit of strict uniformity.

The Adoration, by Innocenza de Imola, the great imitator of Raphael. The Virgin and child in Heaven, St Michael, with the Dragon under his feet, St Peter, and St Dominic, on either side in adoration. This artist is considered as being most happy in his attempts after the celebrated master, whose manner he avowedly copies;

but say what they will of Imola and his imitations, when I see a picture such as this I must take the liberty of expressing my sentiments, and to my conception the character of the whole is wanting in harmony, the colouring, composed of untempered green and yellow, is glaring, the sky a uniform blue, and the figures red and gaudy; St Dominic being, in my opinion, the only dignified and well-drawn figure in the piece.

The Martyrdom of St Agnes, formerly belonging to the church of that name, and ranked among the finest productions of Dominichino. A deep-toned, grand, and richly painted picture, crowded with figures, and a back ground of fine action. The serene and beautiful countenance of the saint is irradiated by an expression of rapt holiness and heavenly resignation, infinitely touching, and finely contrasting with the terror and amazement described with admirable skill and effect in the attitudes of the surrounding multitude. The episode of the two women forming the foreground of one corner of the picture, who are represented as hiding the face, and stilling the screams, of a terrified child, affords a scene of fine action very admirably delineated. But yet the act of the martyrdom is too deliberate. The murderer, plunging the dagger into her bosom, should turn off with something of horror from a deed committed in cold blood, unexcited by any principle of fury or revenge.

God the Father, by Guercino, formerly belonging to the church of Jesus and Maria. The Almighty is represented with the left hand resting on the globe, the right being raised in the clouds, and the Holy Spirit seen hovering over his head. The countenance is that of an old man, having a long beard and grey hairs; the figure is enveloped in the folds of a rich Cardinal's cloak, while on his brow an expression of anxious thought is seated, wrinkling the forehead with deep lines of care, as if meditating with perplexity on the world he had created. The circumstance of Guercino's having executed this picture in one night by the light of flambeaus, seems to be perfectly ascertained; but it is difficult not to regret that the artist had chosen for proof of his celebrity a task so difficult, or, I ought rather to say, impossible, as that of representing the Eternal Father.

The superb picture of the Murder of the Innocents, by Poussin. A most powerful piece, and composed with wonderful effect and skill. The figures are of the full size of life; the terror, dismay, and wildness of the different groups, are admirably pourtrayed, and, notwithstanding the violence of the action, each head is beautiful as that of an angel; the naked ruffians, with their uplifted daggers and sacrilegious hands stained with blood, are drawn in the finest style, and with all the energy of pitiless soldiers inured to such deeds. The outcry of one mother,

dragged by her scarf and hair, and held by one of these men till he reaches her child; the pale dishevelled aspect of another, breathless with terror, fainting, and delayed in her flight from agitation; the despair and agony of a third beyond these, who sits wringing her hands over her slaughtered babes; the touch of madness pictured on the fine countenance, which is uplifted with an indescribable expression of the utmost agony; the murdered babes filling the lower corner of the picture, lying on the blood-stained marble, so pale, so huddled together, so lifeless, yet so lovely and innocent in death, present an historical picture, perhaps the most domestic and touching that was ever painted. The broad shadows, the correctness, roundness, and simplicity of drawing in the whole, are inconceivably striking, the colour consistent and harmonious, no one point overlaboured, yet no effect neglected.

An Adoration by Ludovico Caracci. An inimitable painting, in which the artist has displayed the richest stores of genius. The countenance of the Virgin is exquisitely beautiful; a veil, touched with great skill, covers her head, falling in light folds over the bosom and shoulders; and the child, presenting all the animated graces of infantine loveliness, is full of life and nature. St Francis in adoration, and kissing the child's hand, is painted in a dark tone, not to interfere with the principal figures,

and is yet finely made out, as are the angels and the other accompaniments of the picture; the colouring soft and sweetly tinted; the whole being, with wonderful art and keeping, entirely subordinate to the great object of the composition.

The much celebrated St Cecilia of Raffaello; a work esteemed to be among the first productions of this great master. St Cecilia is represented with a lyre, held by both hands, carelessly dropped; the head turned up towards Heaven, with a beautiful pensive countenance, having an expression of concentrated and exalted feeling, as if devoting the best faculties and gifts of God to God, is deeply and touchingly impressive; her drapery is of finely enriched yellow, thrown over a close-drawn tunic; St Paul, a superb dignified figure, fills one corner; St John, drawn with a greater expression of simplicity and delicacy of form, is next to him; St Augustine, another grand figure; and Mary Magdalene, like a sister of the Heaven-devoted Cecilia, stands close by her. All the figures are in a line, but so finely composed, and the disposition of the lights and shades such, as to produce the effect of a beautiful central group, consisting of St Cecilia, Mary Magdalene, and St Peter. Musical instruments scattered on the fore-ground fill it up, but without attracting the eye; a pure blue element forms the

horizon, while high in the Heavens a choir of angels, touched with the softest tints, is indistinctly seen.

The Martyrdom of St Peter, by Guercino, from a church at some distance from Bologna; a very fine picture, but containing all the puerile absurdities so often characterizing compositions on these subjects. St Peter is a large solitary figure, leaning alone in a wilderness with a poniard standing upright in his breast, and a hatchet cleaving his head in twain, the hatchet sticking in his skull like a woodman's axe driven home in a log. What can an artist be thinking of who composes such a scene? not of truth or nature. Perhaps the Monks, who employed him, required that the hatchet and poniard should be left in this manner to prevent mistakes. From the wound inflicted by the hatchet, the blood is seen streaming down the temples, and gushing with still greater force around the poniard. Yet, incredible as it may seem, all this does not destroy the powerful expression of the picture. The elevated and exalted resignation painted on the features of a noble countenance, the effect of the black drapery cast around the kneeling figure, and held in one large majestic fold by the left hand, has a combined effect of grandeur and chaste simplicity, which is inexpressibly fine.

A St Sebastian, by Guido Rheni; a wonderful sketch in a very simple style. St Sebastian, youthful and beau-

tiful, with the most manly, yet slender form, is represented with the left foot firmly planted, the right standing a little higher, raised on a stone, the knee slightly bent, the hands tied behind and fastened to a tree, from which the figure seems bursting away, not with an action of violence or of despair, but as if in youthful strength. The head of the young enthusiast, passionately turned up to Heaven, is exquisitely foreshortened, and shaded with black hair, curling almost in a circle round his fine open forehead. The rounding and display of the shoulder and its parts, the expansion of the flat wide chest, the Apollo-like slenderness, yet manliness of the limbs, the negligent flow of the slight drapery thrown round the middle, the effect of the light, falling down almost perpendicularly on the head and shoulder, the just proportion of the figure to the canvass, with the low unfinished tint of the distant landscape, render this the finest sketch perhaps in existence.

The Flagellation of our Saviour, by Ludovico Caracci; a wild and savage production, pourtraying a scene totally unsuitable to the dignity of the Saviour of mankind. Characters of touching sublimity, of pity, of submission, or resignation, are consistent with the Godhead on earth, as an atonement, or an example, for all the human race; but a representation so revolting, as is here delineated, is at once a violation of good taste and good

feeling. Two red dark-coloured ruffians, resembling figures in Vulcan's cave, are busied, one barbarously pulling up the wrist and right arm of our Saviour to a pillar, while the other holds his head by the hair, almost down to the ground, in a prostrate and ignominious posture, too degrading to be seen in connexion with religious feelings, or in reference to the sacred record. Our Saviour's subjugated figure is so bent down, that the countenance is nearly hidden. The tone of colouring is of a dull red tint; but the drawing of the whole is good, and the foreshortening of the figures finely managed.

A painting by Innocenza da Imola; free from the faults noticed in his last-mentioned composition, but formal, hard, and far from pleasing.

Samson resting after slaying the Philistines, by Guido Rheni; a most superb picture. Samson may be styled a magnificent representation of youthful strength; and the large manly figures of the Philistines lying upon each other, worthy of being so slain, by miraculous power. The Jewish hero, resting one foot upon the piled bodies of the dead, has his head turned up to heaven, not in triumph, but in thankfulness. The low lying landscape, rising into brightness in the soft tints of early dawn; the distant view of the camp of the Philistines; the grandeur and noble elevation of mind delineated in the form, contour, and action of the conqueror,

thus represented alone in the midst of death; the admirable drawing and foreshortening of the bodies heaped on each other; and the deep solitude and silence that seems to pervade the whole, are inexpressibly fine. Nothing barbarous or brutal is represented; no blood is seen. It is one great simple epic story. A fine and solemn scene, forming a very inestimable picture.

The Crucifixion, by Guido, from the suppressed church of the Capuchines. The agony of our Saviour; the gentle love and adoration of St John; the fervour with which Mary Magdalene, kneeling, embraces the lower part of the cross; the last drooping of Mary; the mournful solemnity, the sombre tint of the landscape, are very striking. It is, perhaps, the finest and most finished picture in existence. The magnificent size of the figures, the fulness without heaviness of the drapery, the deep fine tone of the colouring, with the impression excited from the awful stillness of the scene, are wonderful.

The Annunciation, by Tiarini; a singularly beautiful, delicate, and elegant picture; if it has a fault, it is that of being too beautiful; the Virgin too familiar; I would almost say, too naïve; but still an exquisite, deep-toned, and precious work.

There are many other paintings in the Academy well worthy of attention.

I shall now mention a few of the most remarkable contained in the churches and palaces of the city.

PALAZZO SAMPIERE.

The ceiling of the first hall of this palace is by Ludovico Caracci, in which Jupiter with the Eagle, and Hercules, are represented, and are in form, dignity of feature, and magnificence of character, finely suited to harmonize as a group. The muscular figure and gigantic bulk of Hercules is imposing, without extravagance; a perfect acquaintance with the human figure is displayed, with admirable foreshortening, and great skill and boldness in composition and execution. The artist's knowledge of anatomy is discoverable from his correct proportions and fine bendings, but is not obtruded on the eye by caricatured or forced lines. On the chimney-piece of the same room there is a piece by Augustine Caracci, representing Ceres with her torch in search of Proserpine; and in the back ground, the figures of the Rape of Proserpine by Pluto. This is not so fine a work. The story is not well told. The figures in the back ground are straggling, and too distinctly seen in the clear yellow of a pale sky. The ceiling of the second hall is by Hannibal Caracci, representing the Apotheosis of Her-

cules, received, after the end of his labours, into Heaven, and conducted by Virtue, who is leading the way. But here we find Hercules become much older, and without any portion of the dignity which characterized his features and aspect in the first painting, by the brother of this artist; the figure of Virtue is heavy; and her action, which seems to be that of pushing up with both hands a small round dark cloud, as if to gain admittance to Heaven, is ungraceful. Neither the invention nor composition of this piece is good: there is no aerial lightness, no delusion in the perspective; and the colouring is as flaming as if fresh from a brass-founder's shop, the figures and sky having throughout a bright brazen tint. This painting is, however, mentioned as being a fine work; but (as I have already said) I have often had occasion to observe the imposing effect produced by a great name. The ceiling of the third hall, by Augustino Caracci, represents Hercules and Atlas supporting the globe. The two figures are not well grouped, but are standing opposed to each other in a sort of discontented humour, rather like rivals than mutual labourers. As academic figures, and as evincing skill in difficult foreshortening, the piece has great merit, although even this portion is not quite faultless, as the right limb of Atlas is bad, and the left thigh, which is raised in the air too long. The painting on the chim-

ney-piece, by the same master, in which Hercules is represented holding down Cacus, and ready to pierce him with the sharp edge of his club, is rather a feeble production. The ceiling of the fourth hall is by Guercino. The subject represents Hercules strangling Antæus. A superb piece, with fine deep-toned colouring, and wonderful power of chiaroscuro. The figure of Hercules is very grand, but seems to have occupied rather too much of the artist's care. It is undoubtedly necessary to keep down the subordinate characters in a piece, but hardly so much as we find it in this group. Antæus is wanting in vigour; the resisting arm is not drawn with force or bulk corresponding to the action; neither are the figures sufficiently connected. The subject being to exhibit the choking of Antæus by Hercules, the effect would have been heightened, and the act of struggling more powerfully expressed, had he been pressed home to the body of Hercules, and had the arms of the subdued figure been clasped in agony, in the tight grasp of his adversary. But the whole piece, although liable to these criticisms, is a work of great vigour, and unquestionable merit.

In one of the accompanying ornaments of the ceiling there is a beautiful little painting by Guercino, of Love (I think it should have been Ganymede) carrying off the spoils of Hercules, the skin of the Nemean lion, and the

club. The motto under it is "hæc ad superos gloria pandit."

There is also a very fine collection of pictures in the Marischalchi.

CATHEDRAL.

I shall now proceed to take a slight view of the paintings of some of the churches of Bologna, beginning with the Cathedral. The exterior of this edifice, which is not of ancient date, is not recommended by any particular merit, and has a dome according to the French manner, to me most offensive; but the architecture within, of Corinthian pilasters, with a frieze and deep cornice, is good, and the whole rich, light, and elegant. In the sanctuary, there is an Annunciation, a fresco painting by L. Caracci; interesting only as being his last work, this having been finished immediately before his death. Nothing is more remarkable than the various degrees of merit exhibited at different times in the works of the same master. The artist has his happy moments of inspiration, exciting the mind to the highest excellence; but these, even in the first class of talent, must have their ebb and flow.

The Repentance of St Peter, by Aretino, of the Flo-

rentine school;—the colouring of this painting is bad, but the drawing very fine. St Peter is represented amidst the twelve Apostles, receiving the keys; the composition good, and colouring powerful, but the draperies rather heavy and ungraceful, and the sky cold. In one of the side chapels there is a very excellent picture by Graziani. The subject the Baptism of St John. The composition is well conceived, and the colouring beautiful; but the expression of the whole is injured by a certain mythological cast, observable in many of the works of the period. The Evangelist is surrounded by innumerable little fluttering angels, which greatly spoil the dignity and solemnity of a christian scene. Such representations should be distinguished by a noble chaste simplicity, true to feeling and to nature.

THE CHURCH OF ST DOMINIC.

The dome of the sixth chapel of this church, executed in fresco by Guido, is esteemed one of the finest works of this celebrated master. The roof forms a semicircular arch, in the centre of which St Dominic is represented ascending into paradise, received by our Saviour on the one hand, and the Virgin Mary on the other. In the highest circle of the dome, a soft radiance, emanating

from the Holy Spirit, illuminates the picture, touching, with partial lights, the heads of our Saviour, of Mary, and the Saint, who are placed at equal distances; while a choir of angels, exquisitely designed, and finely coloured, fills the space below; the foreground being occupied by a number of musical instruments, violoncellos, guitars, violins, and harps, which are arranged with wonderful skill and effect. The composition of the whole rises in a fine pyramidical form, harmonizing at once with the subject, and the proportions of the dome.

The Altar Piece of the Chapel, by Lombardi, is well worthy of notice. There is also a very excellent picture, a work of much expression and detail, by Leonardo Spadi, the subject of which is the miracle of St Dominic, when the book refused to be burned. One person is seen holding the chafing dish, while another is lying down and blowing; while one of the aged spectators, represented as being much astonished and confounded at the inefficacy of these endeavours, is seen putting on his spectacles to read the title of a book held by one of the saints, and understood also to have resisted the power of the flames. The picture is fourteen feet high, and, in spite of all this nonsense, is good. Opposite to this painting there is a fine Nativity, by Alexander Casini, a pupil of Caracci. The Church of St Bartolomeo :—In the fifth chapel of this church, we find Guido's celebrated

picture of the Virgin and Child, a most exquisite composition, simple and touching. It is held so precious that they have very properly framed and glazed it. The history of the preservation of this little valuable work, when the French were in this city, is told here with great interest. During their stay in Bologna it was carefully concealed in what was styled the Madonna's Chamber, and is now again replaced upon the altar.

The Altar Piece by Franceschini, on the Martyrdom of St Bartolomeo; a grand but horrible picture, yet less savage than the statue of Milan on the same subject, as here at least the actual representation of torture is spared. The saint is tied and drawn up high on a tree ready for sacrifice; two ferocious figures are seen tightning the ropes, while a third is deliberately preparing to excoriate one of his legs, where a little blood appears, but there, and there only. This church is in a very chaste and good style of ornament. Corinthian pilasters with deep capitals, the pannelling prettily painted, relieved by slight and delicate gilding, and the whole simple and elegant.

The Church of St Petronius, the patron saint of Bologna, (in which the meridian executed by the celebrated Cassini, is preserved,) is a fine Gothic edifice. Among the paintings in this church, the picture contained in the last chapel, executed by Guercino, may be esteemed one

of the finest. The subject represents St Thomas composing on the subject of the Eucharist, with two inspiring angels. Their wings are perhaps rather heavy, and their limbs a little straggling, but the design and manner of the whole is very superior.

ST LUKE.

The Church of the Madonna of St Luke; so named, as being the repository of the painting representing the Virgin and Child, said to be executed by that Apostle. The church is situated on the summit of Monte Guardi, commanding a most extensive and beautiful prospect. In one direction the view is bounded by the long range of Appenines, seen rising dark and green in the distance; far towards the east, the Adriatic, or Gulf of Venice, opens to the view, while, in rich and varied grandeur, spread out in the plains below, the eye distinguishes innumerable fine cities, Ferrara, Modena, Mantua, and part of Tuscany, with villages, convents, and churches interspersed, the whole relieved by the brightest verdure, gay and sparkling under the influence of the clear blue of a serene sky. A portico, composed of more than seven hundred arcades, forms a noble covered gallery, reaching from the walls of the city to the church, a dis-

tance of three miles, renders the ascent towards it every way delightful. The singular erection, the enchanting prospect, and fresh breeze, inhaled on reaching the summit of Monte Guardi, is, however, the chief reward offered to the traveller for visiting the church of the Madonna of St Luke. The painting, which is carefully locked up in a recess above the great altar, was shown with much appearance of mystery, and such haste, as to have caused some difficulty in discovering either the beauty of the Madonna, or value of the case in which she was enclosed, which (we were told) was of gold set with diamonds. A painting, in another part of the church, represents this picture when on its journey here in a large wooden box, as flying self-impelled.

The most splendid procession of Bologna is that held in honour of this Madonna, the miracles performed by her having been very surprising, and more so than those imputed to any other in the city.

In this slight survey of works of art in Bologna, I must not omit mentioning the statues of the celebrated artist of that name, preserved in his native city as a memorial of him, although I must acknowledge that on this their chief claim to notice rests. Neptune, who presides over the fountain, is a colossal heavy figure in the attitude of preaching, and wondering at, rather than commanding, the waves of the ocean; boys in the four cor-

ners are represented as having bathed small dolphins, which they are holding by the tail to make them spout water, while four female Tritons fill the space beneath; these fold their marine extremities between their limbs, and press their bosom with their hands, to cause the water to flow. The whole composition and manner is quaint, somewhat in the French style, and such as I should have been less surprised to find at Versailles than at Bologna. The principle of thus adorning the squares or public edifices of a city is good, but the accomplishment offers many difficulties. The designs being necessarily colossal, faults, whether in general composition or in anatomical accuracy, are easily detected, while, at the same time, the facility of viewing the work from every direction, calls for a double portion of knowledge and attention from the artist. A statue, opposite to this fountain, of Pope Gregory the Fourth, is good, but strangely disfigured from a whimsical accident: his crozier is like a Goliah's spear or a weaver's beam; and on inquiring into the cause of this inconsistency, I was informed that the French, offended with the pastoral shaft, had taken it and the cap away, and now the municipality thought they could not do too much to restore him, and so gave him one as thick as his leg. They took down the old inscription, substituting this, "Divus, Papa, Patronus."

APPROACH TO FLORENCE.

After a residence of a few days we left Bologna, which we did not forsake without regret. Many circumstances in a peculiar manner tend to awaken attention in the traveller who visits this city. The singular beauty of the surrounding country, the high cultivation of science, its valuable possessions in the arts, as also the courtesy and amenity which so entirely characterize the manners and tone of society, powerfully combine to excite the most lively interest, and to leave impressions on the mind not easily forgotten.

The road from this city to Florence is through valleys and over mountains. Passing by the Porta Fiorentina, we first coursed a Highland valley by the side of a beautiful stream, where a mill is seated, in a most picturesque spot, with mountain scenery, rising in fine perspective from behind, and in front, up to the summit of the Alps, across which our road lay. After passing the village of Panora, we proceeded to ascend the great chain of the Appenines, separating the plains of Lombardy from Tuscany; winding our way along a narrow road, sometimes bordering the edge of a precipice on one side, while on the other the mountains, clothed with fine trees, growing in every wild and fantastic form, rise pre-

cipitously; at other times, our path lay inclosed by rocks, which, occasionally opened by chasms, suddenly offered to our view the distant perspective of the country we had passed.

At Sajano, the first stage from Panora, the prospect becomes more extensive; here the eye may trace the chain of mountains from Turin, Milan, Verona, the plains of Padua, and Lombardy, through which the majestic Po, with its tributary streams, courses onwards to the sea. We passed the night in this place, at a little inn, situated in a sequestered romantic spot, from which, at the distance of four miles, there is a volcano, called Pietra Mala, the stones of which are said to be almost always red. I wished much to visit this phenomenon, interesting to me as being the first volcanic matter which I had an opportunity of examining; but I was forced to leave my curiosity ungratified. Next morning, after a very steep ascent of about two hours, we reached Cavigliaio, and here we had our first distinct view of the Adriatic.

From this spot the road becomes less precipitous, and after a most pleasing and winding drive, we reached the Maschere, the first stage from Sajona, being about fifteen miles from Florence. This house, which formerly belonged to a nobleman, and is now converted into an inn, offers nothing peculiar in its aspect, presenting only a

tame flat style of architecture; but its site is the most singular, commanding, and beautiful, imaginable. Seated on the highest summit of the Appenines, it overlooks the brow of a mountain, which, although covered with trees, is almost perpendicular; while on the plain far below lies the beautiful vale of Arno, bound by a circle of magnificent hills, sometimes rising in acclivities, sometimes in polished knolls or bold promontories, cultivated to the very summit with the vine and olive, interspersed with fruit and forest trees, and thickly studded with villas, convents, and churches, presenting an aspect of extraordinary animation and beauty. Turning from the contemplation of this rich, lively, and cultivated landscape, to the bold country spread abroad among the Appenines behind the Maschere, you behold a prospect finely contrasting nature in all its most polished splendour, with the wild and majestic grandeur of mountain scenery. The singular and striking beauty of this spot often arrests the steps of the traveller journeying towards Florence, or returning thence, insomuch that many meaning to pass on, have been induced to remain, even for weeks, at the Maschere. We also stopped a short time, but impatient to reach the termination of our journey, health alone caused the delay. After reposing two days, we once more set forth, and bowling lightly along a fine road, running in a rapid descent, reached the

gates of Florence early in the morning of a beautiful day, and drove at full speed to the Hotel di York, in the centre of the city.

I shall now suspend my journal, and confine myself to such general remarks as may arise from surrounding objects, describing the most distinguished specimens in the arts, comprising the several branches of architecture, statuary, and painting, as a source of relaxation and relief from my more serious labours, as also with the view of assisting the researches of the young traveller, by directing his attention to those works which are more especially worthy of notice.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

FLORENCE—TUSCAN ARCHITECTURE—PUBLIC BUILDINGS —PODESTA — PALAZZO VECCHIO — DUOMO — ST MICHAEL'S TOWER—PALACES—LOGGIA—DEI LANZI—STATUES IN THE SQUARE.

FLORENCE.

While the eye rests on this far-famed and beautiful city, its magnificent edifices, fine architecture, and antique buildings, rising in dark and imposing majesty, its bridges, and its noble river, watering, far as the eye can reach, the vale of the lovely Arno, the mind insensibly wanders back, and recalls the days when turbulence and bloody feuds raged within the walls; when on the surrounding amphitheatre of hills, now luxuriant with the olive and vine, and richly studded with peaceful dwellings, stood, proudly frowning, the castellated towers of the feudal chief, at once a terror and protection to the city. Of these towers scarcely a trace remains.

The imagination unconsciously embodies the aspect of Florence with its history, and the recollection of what it has been, seems to form an integral part with its present appearance. The mind dwells on the days of other times, their troubles, horrors, and glories; and the fancy not unwillingly rests on the early pictures of a city, whose ardent spirit, ambition, and genius, thus produced an eventful and ever-changing scene. We behold them in fearful and rapid alternation, now with the noble spirit of equitable patriotism, encouraging the arts, and balancing power; and now, suddenly plunged into anarchy, with all its dismal train of horrors.

We find, in tracing the earlier periods of Florentine history, a wide field for speculation, where, though much is left to conjecture, there is likewise much to interest the philosopher, and to excite the imagination. The Florentines appear to have been a bold and ingenious race; and we are led to attribute the fearful feuds which convulsed the city, staining her streets with blood, and darkening the pages of her annalists, no less to the result of national character, than to the effect of moral causes bearing upon a high-minded people, fighting for renown and independence.

The love of science and the arts, for which they have been so peculiarly distinguished, and which was constantly found mingling with all their warlike habits and

passions, bespeaks a high strain of genius, which still serves to ennoble and adorn their eventful history.

Florence should be the very school of the fine arts. Even in the period when Italy shone brightest in mental powers—when science and learned men enlightened the rest of Europe, Florence, high in the scale of recorded merit, enjoyed pre-eminence. To the distinctions of splendid talent she added a sedulous application to the sources of wealth. While she fought for independence, and protected science, she enriched her people by widely extended commerce. A merchant was there a proud appellation, and constantly found among her nobles and her rulers. The elevated station which this republic attained, and which, for a season, shed such lustre on her name, had its birth in the combined influence of the talent, wisdom, wealth, and magnificent spirit, which adorned the House of Medici. Yet it was by slow stages that she rose to such distinction: centuries of devastation, turbulence, and bloodshed, preceded this luminous era.†

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† The Author had made notes for a sketch of the history of Florence, but as these had not undergone any revision by himself, the Editor has not published them.

TUSCAN ARCHITECTURE.

The Tuscan architecture may be described as presenting the image of simple grandeur. Strength and power have been considered as the sole guides on which the Etruscan architect founded his principles; but if force, security, and the means of defence, were originally his only objects, these soon gave place to a higher sentiment, combining nobleness with strength.

The great masters who flourished in the time of Cosmo de Medici, could not be ignorant of Grecian architecture; but, while introducing Grecian ornaments, it is evident they acted on the principle of perpetuating the Etruscan style; the most prominent features of which, I should say, were the vast stones, the noble square forms of their edifices, and their deep, heavy, projecting cornices.

The great Michael Angelo had peculiarly the talent of combining in architecture the rustic with the polished, the Etruscan with the Roman, and the ancient with the modern style. The masters of that period retained the bases of the Etruscan, varied by the Roman and Grecian; but still the original style is to be traced in all their most finished buildings, a style powerful, and peculiarly marked by strength. It was hereditary, and

they were fond of it; it was grand, and it pleased them; it suited the warm climate in its courts and halls, and was adapted to warlike times, from the depth and strength of its walls.

Strabo says, the most ancient Tuscan buildings were great masses of hewn stones, built without cement, such as neither weather nor time could destroy.

In the noble edifices and palaces erected in the first ages of restored art, the Florentines have maintained the simple square forms, and grand models of earlier times. They have retained the ground stone line, the coarse rustic base, the large stones, the iron rings, the stone seat, the massiveness, squareness, and the grand projecting cornice above, giving shelter from the glowing light of the mid-day sun.

Every house was a garrison; and the city had that gloomy cast, which all the splendour of the Ducal court, and of the embassies of foreign powers, and her excellence in art, have not entirely changed.

The walls round Florence form a circumference of five miles, and, in ancient times, were guarded by sixteen towers, having an equal number of gates. In the year 1455, Cosmo de Medici caused the circle of the wall to be extended, at which period the towers were either entirely demolished, or cut down, their existence being now only to be traced where their foundations were left to

strengthen the walls. The passage across each bridge was defended by similar edifices; so as were many of the palaces and houses of individuals. The effect of these towers must indeed have been singularly striking and grand; an observation we find made in the Viaggio Pittarico, where the destruction of these ancient monuments, which guarded the walls of Florence, is mentioned with much regret. Their removal, or at least the diminishing of their number, in the interior of the city, which took place at the same period, Machiavelli mentions as having been a most salutary measure, not only as it lessened the temptation to civil broils, but also rendered the air more salubrious; the ravages of the plague, with which the city had been so often afflicted, being supposed to arise from the obstruction to ventilation which they occasioned.*

* The only vestiges of these antique buildings are to be found on Mount San Miniato, which bears on Porto San Nicolo. In the year 1525, this tower, even then partly in ruins, was converted into a regular fort by Michael Angelo Buonarroti. The moment was most interesting. The people, willing to regain that liberty which they thought had been invaded by some of the measures of Alexander, one of the descendants of the Medici, had dispossessed him of his authority, and banished him the city. Charles the Fifth of Germany, and Pope Clement the Seventh, espousing his cause, advanced with their united force against Florence. The despair and consternation was general, when the singular talents and promptitude of this great master rescued the people (at least for the time) from the impending danger, he having raised fortifications with such skill as entirely to defend the city. The number of gates was at this time reduced to seven, each of which he guarded by new erections, the most distinguished of which were those planted on Mont San Miniato. The citizens,

In the earlier periods preceding these events, the possession of a tower was the great distinction of every Florentine noble. It served as a castle for him and for his faction; it was a protection to his palace, to which it was attached, and rose in grandeur above the walls of the city. Within the ponderous jaws of the narrow portal of this fort, a stout man in armour was a defence against a thousand. Beneath the tower was a strongly vaulted portico, and through the roof of this, by a small square opening, was a passage into the tower, which was ascended by means of a rope.

When Totila spoiled the city, there were sixty-two towers defended by gentlemen of Florence. These arched porticos were the places of resort for the Guelph and Ghibelline factions.

But whatever might be the state of confusion into which the inhabitants of Florence were thrown by internal commotions, or the aggressions of foreign states,

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elated by the means of resisting the united power of two great potentates, maintained a dignified and fearless demeanour. The magistrates fulfilled their accustomed formulæ; justice was administered, shops frequented, and public games held as usual. One only change was observed, no bells were sounded in the night. But all proved vain; a scarcity of provisions compelling them, after a long resistance, at length to yield. A short time after this event, in the year 1531, Alexander obtained from Clement the Seventh the title of Duke, to which distinction his descendant, Cosmo, received the added honour of being styled Grand Duke, conferred upon him in the year 1569, by Pope Pius the Fifth.—*Note by the Author.*

still, in the midst of every turmoil, they were careful to open every avenue by which their city might be enriched.

The merchants were engaged in wide-extended commerce, bringing wealth from distant shores, and bearing their proud state with Popes and Kings. Ambassadors from Florence graced every court in Europe—their relations were spread far abroad, and their influence had a powerful effect on public opinion; their houses were at once warehouses and palaces; the arcades, under which their midnight factions met, were by day the Exchange and the place of their trade. The very form of the palaces marks at once the Tuscan origin of the city and her feudal state.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The architecture of Florence is grand and gloomy beyond that of all the other cities in Italy. Were these singular buildings displayed by greater breadth of street, or if these imposing fabrics could be translated to other cities, the vast and magnificent character which distinguishes the Tuscan style would then be seen. To this hour Florence bears the aspect of a city filled with nobles and their domestics,—a city of bridges, churches,

Gherardi Del.t

W.H. Lizars Sculp.t

VIEW OF PONTE DI SANTA TRINITA.

LIBRARY—ROYAL ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS—ROMA

and palaces. Every building has a superb and architectural form; the streets are short, narrow, and angular, and each angle presents an architectural view, fit to be drawn for a scene in a theatre; each house is a palace, and a palace in Florence is a magnificent pile, of a square and bulky form, of a grand and gloomy aspect, with a plain front, extending from two to three hundred feet, built of huge dark grey stone, each measuring three or four feet. A coarse rubble work rises in a solid form to twenty or thirty feet in height. A great grooved stone, or slybolate, sets off the building from the street, forming a seat which runs the whole length of the front; and which, in feudal times, was occupied by the dependants of the family: who there loitering in the sultry hours of the day, lay asleep under the shelter of the broad deep cornice, which projecting from the roof threw a wide shade below. The immense stones of this coarse front bear huge iron rings in capacious circles, in which sometimes were planted the banners of the family; at others they were filled with enormous torches, which, in times of rejoicing, burned and glared, throwing a lengthened mass of light along the walls. Not unfrequently merchandise was displayed drawn through these rings, and sometimes also they served for tying up the horses of the guests.

The first range of windows, which are ten feet from the ground, are grated and barred with massive frames of iron, resembling those of a prison, and producing an effect singularly sombre and melancholy. The front of this building has on the second floor, styled *piano nobile*, a plain and simple architrave. The windows are high and arched, placed at a considerable distance from each other, and are ten or fifteen in number, according to the extent of the front. They were often so high from the floor within, that in turbulent times, when the house was itself a fortress, the besieged, leaping up three or four steps to the window, would from thence view and annoy the enemy. The third story is like the second in plainness, and in the size of the windows. The roof is of a flat form, with a deep cornice and bold projected soffits, which gives a grand, square, and magnificent effect, to the whole edifice. The chimneys are grouped into stacks: the tops of which, increasing in bulk as they rise in height, resemble a crown; the slates with which they are constructed, are placed in such a manner as to produce the effect of ventilation, having a plited form, resembling the fan heads of the inside of a mushroom. This gives a rich and finished aspect to the most trivial or most undignified part of the building. Immense leaden spouts, that project three or four feet, collect the waters, which, in the great rains of these countries, fall with ex-

treme violence, descending with the rush and noise of torrents from the roof.

Two or three long flat steps lead to the porch of the palace; and the entrance is by a high arched massive iron gate, the doors of which are cross-barred, studded with iron and bronze nails, and the ornaments of the pannels are richly covered and embossed. The effect of these gates is very splendid. They open into a cortile or court, the base of which is encircled by a high arched colonnade, supported by marble columns. Beautiful gardens often adjoin the palace, and through a corresponding gate or iron-railings, the eye rests on the luxuriant verdure of rich foliage.

It was under these arcades, shaded from the noon-tide, and cooled by the waters of the fountain which occupy the centre of the court, that the rich merchandise of the east, the silks and shawls and fine linen, and all the valuable manufactures of Tuscany, lay spread out, as in a place of exchange; while under vast, arched, and vaulted chambers, was stored the wealth which was there brought for sale. Entering from this court, a great stair-case leads to a suite of noble chambers, halls, and saloons, hung with silks, and richly adorned. The lofty ceilings are finely painted; the beams are always displayed, but are carved, ornamented, and gilded, so as to form a splendid part of the whole. The arcades of the court support the

galleries, which, in former times, were generally filled with fine paintings, statues, vases, and precious relics of antiquity.

In such palaces, the rulers, the magistrate, the noble, and the merchant, dined, surrounded by their family and adherents. The manner of the times bore a character of manly simplicity, which singularly contrasted with the splendour of the rich possessions, and the importance of their political sway among nations.

Their guests were seated not by rule, rank, or birth, but in the order in which they happened to arrive.

At the board of Lorenzo the Magnificent, whose court was adorned by the most distinguished men of the age, as well in letters and science as in rank, Michael Angelo and other celebrated artists were often seated next to himself; nor did these habits lessen the respect or deference of the dependents, as we may judge by the picture given by Cellini and other writers of those days. From this combination of princely power and pristine simplicity, inducing that familiar intercourse of lord and dependants, of rich and poor, arose those friendly greetings, those salutations in the streets, which to this day excite the admiration of strangers. Such were the palaces of the Medici, the Ricardi, and the Strozzi; but they are now gloomy and silent. Their chambers no longer are filled with the elegant works of art, paintings,

statues, and rich ornaments; the magnificence which marked the splendour of their name and state is no more seen, nor is the ear arrested by the merry sound of voices, or of people hurrying in the noisy busy throng of commercial bustle. Her palaces are solitary; a sabbath-like silence reigns in the streets, and the princes and merchants, the proud, the generous, the noble Florentines, who gave aid to kings, and succoured popes, are now a poor, subdued, submissive race.

The Florentine artists did not rise into notice till towards the beginning of the thirteenth century. Arnolpho Lapo, and Cimabue, are the first who find a place in the records of the annalists. These were followed by a succession of great artists, whose works and talents have stamped a name and character on their city.

Florence, like Athens, rose to power and splendour in fifty years. Her most celebrated men, whether distinguished in science and enterprize, or in deep and laborious researches in literature, flourished almost at the same period. Learned institutions were formed; schools for the study of the Greek language revived; and public discussions were held by different sects of philosophers, at which Cosmo and his grandson Lorenzo used to assist. The minds of the people, thus awakened to knowledge, acquired brilliancy, and refinement in taste and

in science. One pursuit created another; excellence produced excellence; and ambition and rivalship begot talent.

We find the simple and majestic style of Arnolpho giving a severe and dignified aspect to Florence. It is a peculiar and integral style, different from every other that is derived from earlier times, and of which, Arnolpho, if he did not find it in Fiesoli, must be considered the inventor. It is a style in which the master studied to produce one simple expression;—that of grace and majesty, which is singularly calculated to give a character of dignity to a city. Florence is a school where every variety of architecture may be studied. There are distinguished three characters—the severe and imposing of Arnolpho Lapo; the refined Tuscan of Brunelleschi; and the decorous and magnificent of Michael Angelo.

The genius of this last great master was peculiarly suited to the vast and noble Tuscan structure, which he combined with some of the finer Grecian proportions, and beautiful fantastic forms of the Gothic. The simplicity of earlier times was corrected by these bearing on the natural Tuscan bases, and the style was improved and enriched without its character being lost. To an alliance of the Grecian architecture, with the simple majesty of the Tuscan, Michael Angelo added the well-spread out balcony, the noble window, the rich friezes, and the

trellis work. If pilastres and columns in front had been also added, the Tuscan would have been entirely changed to the Grecian order.

One thing is peculiarly worthy of notice—the divisions and coarse chisellings of the rubble-work, with which the bases of these great edifices are ornamented, are essential to the effect and composition. It is like a wash in drawing, which, however slight, takes off the cold white glare, and gives a colour such as hatching does in engraving. The gravity and solemnity of the stately mass is thus ensured, and the glare of an ardent sun, which often proves injuriously dazzling, is corrected. Were it not owing to this, such vast edifices as the palaces of the Strozzi or Ricardi, smooth and fair as a villa, would present a tame and insipid front, vast without grandeur, and requiring columns or other massive enrichments to give relief. This hatching contributes to gravity as well as ornament, uniting the whole, and giving the bases apparent strength to support the weight above.

Men of talents different from those of St Gallo or Michael Angelo, attempted to amend and refine, by polishing and smoothing a grave and magnificent front, which derived grandeur from its dimensions. To this professional discovery, they gave the dignified name of Pietra Serena; and this, which suited well with small

houses, or rich and delicate ornaments, they extended over fronts that were consistent only with rude masonry and stones of great embossment, such as mark the antique and majestic style.

Cimabue, born in the year 1240, is the first who, in those early times of restored art, is supposed to have thrown expression into the human countenance. Arnolpho di Lapo,* born in 1263, was his pupil for design; for Cimabue, contrary to the usual practice, did not unite with his knowledge in painting, that of architecture and sculpture. The masters who followed him, generally combined these three arts, and were often also poets and men of great learning. Alberte, who flourished early in the fifteenth century, was one of the first scholars of his age; Arcagna, by whose name the Piazzo Lanzi is generally distinguished, used to inscribe on his statues, "fece dal Pittore," and on his paintings, "dal Scultore."

The ancients esteemed knowledge in almost every science essential to form a good architect. Vitruvius, whose elevated mind and disinterested spirit took the noblest view of his profession, enumerates the various

* The father of this artist was also an architect, which has occasioned considerable confusion in respect to the dates of such edifices as were commenced by the father, and finished by his son, having only been distinguished by the general appellation of Arnolpho Lapo, or sometimes Lapi.

branches of knowledge requisite, to which he gives an extension somewhat appalling to the young student. He requires that he should be master of design, have an acquaintance with geometry, optics, history, arithmetic, and the principles of philosophy; that he should not be ignorant of medicine, music, jurisprudence, or astrology, summing up the whole by an injunction to combine perseverance with ingenuity, and so produce excellence.

PUBLIC EDIFICES.

Hitherto I have confined my remarks to a general picture of the city. I now propose to make some observations on its architecture in different styles. The following list contains a few notes relative to the finer works, in the Gothic and Grecian manner, to be found in Florence.

The Podesta, now styled il Bargello, Palazzo Vecchio, the Duomo, St Michael's Tower, denominated Or San Michele, form the most remarkable examples of the earlier manner; while along the Arno, and in the extremities of the city, are to be found noble specimens by Michael Angelo, of the rich and more finished style of modern times; for in this small city, architecture may be studied in all its stages.

PALAZZO DEL PODESTA, OR IL BARGELLO.

Toward the year 1250, this edifice, originally called Palazzo Degli Anziani, or Podesta, was erected by Arnolfo di Lapo, and intended for the council and courts of justice, as also for the residence of three of the chief magistrates. These were the Gonfaloniere,* whose special duty it was to administer justice; il Esecutore, to preside over criminal causes; and il Capitano, to protect and support these in the administration of their several departments. The office of Esecutore was a new charge, having effect for the first time at the period of the erection of the Podesta, and was filled by Matteo dei Terribile d'Amelia. We are told that this palace was the first whose decorations displayed a rising taste for the arts; but its magnificence was not of long duration. Towards the year 1299, the seat of government was removed to Palazzo Vecchio, at which time this edifice was converted into a prison, and took the appellation of Il Bargello.

The severe and gloomy grandeur peculiar to the style of Arnolfo accorded well with the disorderly times of the republic. The Podesta stands up, a vast and stern

* We learn from Villani that the office of Gonfaloniere, or Podesta, was first created in the year 1207.—*Note of the Author.*

monument of the character of those days, in its huge bulk, and deep impenetrable walls, within whose centre silence, solitude, and secrecy, seem to reign; whilst its ponderous tower, crowned with embrazures, frowns in sullen and proud defiance of the lapse of time. Ages may roll in vain over its heavy and massive bulwarks. It is not built according to the architecture of the rude and barbarous nations of the north, nor of the Saracen, Gothic, or Greek; but as if it had been conceived in some feverish dream, and were meant by its dismal aspect to terrify into subjection the spirit of a savage people.

This edifice was reared in times full of danger; when the state was divided by factions, assailed by secret conspiracies, or threatened by popular tumult. The magistrates and rulers, often the victims of these discontents, found safety only in vigilance and cruelty, and sought to supply by secret measures their defect of power.

At the portal of the palace gate was placed a silent monitor, termed Tamburazione,* through whose medium, as in the horrible era of revolutionary France, secret communications were conveyed to the state. The denunciation of the noble, or the citizen, was a safe and

* This system was abolished in the year 1436.

simple process. The anonymous informations being lodged in this receptacle, led to speedy and sure detection, the accused person being often hurried to prison without being aware that he was even suspected.

In the palace of the Podesta the judges sat in council, the affairs of state were deliberated upon, embassies received; and in days of revelry and public rejoicings, the festive board was here spread out for the illustrious stranger and royal guest, who not unfrequently graced their feasts; while far below, the prisoner, condemned on proof, or suspected of guilt, was thrust into secret cells, to suffer in silence. Dismal and full of danger as was the situation of the political offender thus delivered to the power of his enemies, his name might yet be remembered, and an account of his disappearance demanded. But a reign of mysterious terror more fearful followed this period; for here, leading from the collateral and subterraneous passages of Santa Croce, the Inquisition was established, the secrets of which dread tribunal none might reveal; and which, even to this day, is spoken of with a sort of mysterious horror. Communications on the subject are uttered in a suppressed tone of voice, and with an anxious eye, glancing round with suspicious care, as if walls might report tales and reveal secrets. The proceedings of this institution, conducted in silence and mystery, were of a nature to strike terror

into the most manly and resolute heart. From the moment of accusation and conviction, nearly synonymous terms, it was death to hold any communication with the prisoner, or to give him food or consolation during the last moments of life, or even the sacred aids of religion; none were suffered to approach him but his dark-minded tormentors. It is not long since the power of committing these legal crimes, as they may be truly styled, still existed; and a circumstance which brought to light some of the horrors of this institution occurred at a period not very remote.

A young man, convicted of the crime of eating meat on Friday, had been dragged from his native city, and lodged in the prisons of the Inquisition. In the interval of his tortures he found means to pass to his prince's hands a letter and a sign. This prince, like Haroun Alraschid, was wont to sally forth, and to walk unattended and unknown through the streets of the city. At midnight he knocked at the gate; the priests of these mysterious cells recognised the voice of their prince with consternation; he forced his way, and found them at their dreadful work, with instruments of torture, and their victims pale, and wild with terror.

Within these cells, now emptied of their wretched inmates, these frightful engines of cruelty are still to be

seen, hung up in triumph, as a tribute to injured humanity.

These times of religious persecution, and their attendant terrors, are gone by; but many are the forms in which suffering is found still to exist. He who visits this prison, even in these days, may approach it with feelings burning from recollections of the times, when scenes of tumult and violence were found within its walls; yet soon will he cease to meditate on what is past, and turn to the present picture of misery, which in this mansion is displayed in every form of wretchedness.

It is difficult now to retrace in this dismal abode the spacious chambers and splendid galleries which once made it a palace. You pass through a square court of an antique gloomy cast; an arcade, which runs along the base, is supported by short thick columns, over which there is a second range of the same coarse form, with capitals of a mixed order; the whole of a dark grey stone, discoloured by time.

On the gate are two lions sitting on their haunches, the supporters of the arms of Florence; while the walls of the court within are covered with monumental stones, on which the names of the nobles and citizens who held the offices of podesta, captain, or judge, are inscribed, and on which are carved dragons, bears, and chained

J. Bell Del.

W. H. Lizars Sculp.

VIEW OF THE BADIA & PODESTA

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
THE BOMBAY BRANCH

Ghezzi del.ᵗ W.H.Lizars Sculpᵗ.

VIEW OF THE PODESTA TAKEN FROM THE DOOR.

dogs, the arms of the palace. The staircase rises in flights, defended on one side by a coarse bulky railing of stone-work. Still as you advance in this dismal mansion, you behold, with increased pain, marks of desolation, and proofs of unnecessary severity in securing the wretched prisoners. The arched and grooved ceilings, and the ranges of magnificent pillars which once adorned this ancient edifice, are now intersected by strong masonry, dividing the cells, which are constructed by perforations in these deep and everlasting walls. A square aperture of three feet high forms the entrance into each of these dim abodes, each cell seeming rather a den than a chamber. The prisoner, forced to bend almost double, passes in, when a strong door, secured with bolts and bars of massive iron, closes on him, excluding all sound, except, perhaps, the reverberation of the closing of another and another heavy door. The windows that run along this stupendous building are oblong, and from eight to twelve feet high. In these divisions are openings of the size of two feet, grated in double rows, with the addition of three strong bars across, through which light and air are admitted to the cells; and as you pass along, you behold a range of grim faces, some pale, and worn by the ravages of disease, others presenting an aspect of sullen and remorseless gloom, without hope or care of life, fit for the axe or guillotine, the

mode adopted in this country to inflict death on the criminal. From stage to stage, as you ascend from one narrow staircase to another, you find the same kind of prison, the same horrid visages meet your eye, fixing on your mind, and painfully haunting the imagination. Whatever offences may have been committed, whether robbery, murder, petty larceny, or prostitution, to which the wretched female is too often driven by beggary and famine, the mode of confinement is the same; and there seems to be no gradation in punishment. The solitary prisoner is not more guilty than another, who, perhaps, forms a group with his family. All appears to be directed by chance: there is no order or regulation; no jailor guards the court or the stairs; each cell is a prison, deep and fast. As I proceeded along, my conductors led me through a dismal gallery, appointed for the receptacle of the dead; three men lay extended in this loathsome place. Arrested by a sight so piteous, I gazed with sorrow on the wretches, whose crimes, whatever they had been, seemed expiated by death under an imprisonment so merciless. Two melancholy simple men who attended me, perhaps mistaking the source of my reflections, and believing us acquainted with the secrets and mysteries of the prison, shaking their heads emphatically, answered (as it were to the supposed subject of my thoughts) sorrowfully, they believed it was very true

that these men had indeed died of very want, "Sono spenti della fame." The start of horror they observed in me alarmed them, as fearful of having betrayed an undivulged tale; and when pressed again simply to avow their personal opinion, they shrugged up their shoulders, declaring that they had eat very little, adding, "ma che vuole o' signore pazienza;" an expression often used to imply consolation, or resignation to what cannot be remedied. We enter an abode like this with terror, and leave it under a despondency that does not soon subside. "I'll go no farther," I said, and left the place.

PALAZZO VECCHIO.

It is impossible to view this edifice without strong sensations; the imposing bulk, the gloomy grandeur of the architecture, with the noble antique tower, singularly combining to impress the imagination.

In the year 1298, this palace, then styled the National Palace, was erected by Arnolfo Lapo, and intended for the double purpose of a residence for the presiding magistrates, and a place of assembly for public deliberation. At this period the number in the magisterial department was augmented, being formed of a Gonfaloniere

and eight Priori, to each of whom two attendants, or secretaries, were assigned, besides one notary, who assisted them all.

These ministers of state were elected every two months, during which period they shared the same table, which was served at the public expense; nor were they suffered to absent themselves, even for a single day, on any pretext whatsoever. It appears that the original plan designed by Arnolfo for this building was finer than that finally adopted. It united symmetry with grandeur, and would have enabled him to plant the building, which now stands obliquely, in fair and just proportion. But he met with insurmountable obstacles. Among the buildings to be thrown down to clear a sufficient space for this great fabric, the habitations of the Ubati, attached to the Ghibellini faction, were designated, and it was in vain that the architect reasoned or entreated; he could not prevail with the people to suffer that any part or portion of the National Palace should touch the ground which these habitations had occupied; and while thus obstinate in their antipathies, their predilection in favour of the antique tower of the Tirabosche della Vacha led them to insist on it being incorporated in the building. It may easily be imagined how vexatious such trammelling must have proved to the architect; but though his plans in other respects were in-

jured by the decisions of the people, their interference in the preservation of this fine antique tower, constituting one of the grandest features in the general aspect of Florence, must be regarded as fortunate.

The entrance into the palace is through a superb but gloomy court, of an oblong form, supported on massive columns. These pillars, in the year 1798, were, with singular skill and science, substituted for those originally planted by Arnolfo. They are eight feet in circumference, of admirable proportions, with plain but varied capitals.

Two figures, or Termini of Marble, by Bandinelli, are painted in the entrance of the court, which is adorned by a number of statues of gigantic proportions.—Among these, a Hercules slaying Cacus, by V. Rossi of Fiesole, a scholar of Bandinelli, is considered fine, and in many points certainly it may be regarded as having merit. But the Florentine school had fallen into the bad taste of representing strength by mere bulkiness, (witness their statues in the hall of this palace.) This is evidently an error; heroic strength does not consist in vulgar squareness, but in grandeur of form, in energy, in fine well-pronounced muscles, in putting the face in its right place, (especially when displayed in the action;) a dignity of attitude, a consciousness, as it were, of irresistible power, should be discernible in the posture and

form of every part and portion of the figure. Square forms and limbs, muscles crowded and knotted together, with a flat coarse face, and rough hair, go but a little way in expressing strength.

Passing along a gloomy staircase, leading to the great hall of this palace, you enter an apartment of vast and magnificent dimensions, of beautiful proportions, and fine architecture. The windows are noble, the light splendid, the walls richly painted, and lined with marble statues. A great flat form crosses the apartment, occupying nearly a sixth part of the whole floor, from which you look down on the greater part below. The general effect is singularly striking and grand. The mind involuntarily figures the vast space spread out before you, filled, as in the times when it was erected, with contentious nobles and turbulent citizens, each girded with his sword, and bearing his spear and shield; you imagine them in all the perturbation and fury of a revolutionary throng, rising into some deed of passion, and filling the city with tumult and slaughter. From this platform, which runs along the whole width of the room, you descend into the hall below, which is about 150 feet in length, and 60 in width, with a most magnificent height of ceiling.

The fresco painting on the walls of the hall are by Vasari, and produce a showy effect, although defective

in composition as well as in design. The groups chiefly consist of ill-fashioned men, and of large horses, with vast white round hips. The artist probably thought that what might be wanting in beauty would be made up in interest, as they represent the battles and victories of the Florentines.*

The ceiling is painted in oil by the same artist, but with more success; the colouring good, and the whole effect rich, from the gilding of the frames, beams, and joists. The chief talent possessed by Vasari seems to have been that of singular expedition in his work. He gives an account himself of six figures, the size of life, in fresco, which he finished in two days.†

The statues, which are ranged along the walls of this palace, being all of tolerable composition, and when seen

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* This nation was less generous than the Greeks, who, unwilling to perpetuate the memory of bloody contests, never suffered their trophies to be made of any materials more durable than baked clay, while the Florentines are so zealous to preserve the memory of their conquests, that to this day are to be seen in entering the city, the massive chains that guarded the gates of conquered Pisa.—*Note of the Author.*

† Fresco, considered as a decorative art, is, when finely done, a beautiful and precious style of painting. An example of the power and effect of which it is susceptible, I found in the Palazzo Acciaiuoli. The subject is scriptural, and is supposed to represent the parable of the labourers, who, having borne the heat and burden of the day, remonstrate on receiving also "one penny." It is painted by an artist who flourished towards the middle of the fifteenth century. For breadth, roundness, fleshiness, and fulness of form, as well as for colouring, expression, composition, and nature, it is, perhaps, equal to anything of the kind, and undoubtedly the finest work in that style in Florence.—*Note of the Author.*

at a distance appearing without fault, produce a fine effect. Of these I shall select only a few for criticism.

On the platform opposite to the entrance of the great door stands a group by Bandinelli; where Pope Clement the Seventh is represented crowning Charles the Fifth; the Pope is sitting, and turns to the Prince, who kneels. The figure of the Pope is wanting in dignity, but the effect of the whole is very good.

A Group, by the same artist, representing Pope Leo the Tenth, with an uplifted hand, as presiding over the arts, is finely placed, seated as it were in a chapel, or recess, at the end of this great room, supported on either side by Pietro and Alessandro di Medici, but the figures are clumsy, heavy, and ungraceful.

Two statues in the garb of Roman Generals, representing Cosmo, Pater Patriæ, and Cosmo, first Grand Duke of Florence, by Vincenzio Rossi, brother of the first mentioned artist, and a pupil of Bandinelli, have the merit of simplicity, which, however, is all that can be said in their favour.

We next find the Labours of Hercules, executed by a brother of the same family

The Hercules and Antæus are very poor; but Hercules and the Centaur are more worthy of notice. The body of the Centaur is admirably wrought, and he kicks well with his right leg against the knee of Hercules;

but the whole is deficient in spirit and action. Hercules seems to pound with his club with the deliberation of one who is playing with a Centaur, not killing him.

Hercules and Cacus, by the same artist, are finished with exquisite skill and care; but still the demigod lays on with polite deliberation, and Cacus, half raised on his elbow, submits with commendable quietness of demeanour.

A statue, in the costume of a Roman General, by this artist, has considerable merit; the posture is easy, the limbs are large, full, and round, without being clumsy; the drapery too is good, and the helmet finely executed.

A Group, personifying Victory, by Michael Angelo, next demands notice. Every work in statuary by this great artist must be interesting; and this statue, though far from equalling some of his later productions, has yet many points of excellence. The group represents a youth turning half round and bending over a crouching figure. The right hand sustains a light thin drapery, which falls gracefully in slender folds, and the left knee is planted on the shoulder of the prostrate enemy. The limbs of the youthful figure are exquisitely formed; but he is represented of such a height, that eleven heads at least go to the length of the body. The crouching figure half kneels on the right knee, and entirely on the left, his

head projecting from between the knees of Victory, while both his hands are tied behind his back. The shoulder, the bending posture, the standing leg of Victory, and the manner in which his left leg lies along the back of the crouching figure, are all fine, but the projection of the head has a most grotesque and ludicrous effect. It is unfinished; the block evidently being too small to furnish materials for the bulky limbs of the prostrate King or Prince.

There are four Grecian statues, good, but not excellent.

There are also a gigantic Adam and Eve by Bandinelli, in which he has given full scope to his passion for the colossal.

So many masses of marble, not meanly cut, and well placed, give a princely splendour to this noble hall; and the whole possess considerable interest, as proofs of the munificence of the Medici, and as offering specimens of art, in the school of which Michael Angelo was a pupil.

THE DUOMO.

This edifice, heavy and lugubrious, is yet magnificent, and, from its imposing bulk, gives grandeur to the city in every distant prospect. The dark and wide interior

appears yet more vast from the deep gloom that reigns throughout, the long aisles seem closing in distant perspective, the echo of the solitary footstep returns slowly on the ear, while the reverberated sound, when the multitude fill its walls, is like the noise of the rising storm, or the loud rushing of waters. Its stone walls are rude and unfinished, its aspect dark and gloomy, but yet grand: it is the gloom of vastness, and the grandeur of ancient times, recalling by its forms and monuments the remembrance and names of many ages. The history of this edifice resembles that of almost every other great work, having been many centuries in building, and, consequently, executed by different artists of various tastes and ages—sometimes painters, sometimes statuaries, and seldom professed architects. It was commenced by Arnolfo Lapo nearly at the same period with the Podesta, St Michael's Tower, and Palazzo Vecchio. The first stone was laid in the year 1289, under the auspices of P. Valeriano, the Pope's Legate, who was friendly to the Florentines. After Lapo's death, Giotto being appointed architect, changed the original front, but still kept it purely Gothic. Every part and pillar was distinguished by the colour of its marble, black, white, and yellow, which must have had a strange effect, like the stripes of the zebra; but formal, barbarous, and tasteless. Every colour is now blended; the bars and bands of the various

marbles assimilated by time, are mellowed into a fine deep tint, resembling a rich drawing, washed and shaded with umbre. Giotto, in his turn, was succeeded by Brunelleschi, styled the restorer of the arts, Donatello, so bound to him in friendship, Baccio, d'Agnolio, Gaddi, Orcagna, Lorenzo di Fileppo, Verrachio, master to Leonardo da Vinci, and the great Michael Angelo, (or Michael Agnolo, as he was anciently styled,) in erecting and adorning this great building. In the year 1334, thirty years after the death of Lapo, Giotto built the Campanile, a marble tower of admirable height and proportion, an exquisite specimen of mixed architecture and of beautiful workmanship, towering in the air, and bearing a fine relation to the church and cupola, which it nearly equals in height. Open and transparent, it rises by stories, with noble windows, partly Grecian, adorned with rich Gothic ornaments, and pannels of basso relievo; the whole in fine marble, chiefly white and dove-colour, not so dull as the Duomo, nor so gaudy as the Certosa. A grand square cornice, projecting from the summit, gives lightness to the tower, adding splendour, from its beautiful proportions, to the whole edifice.

Giotto, neglecting no means that might tend to beautify his work, has finely peopled his pannels with scriptural subjects, in basso relievo, producing a finished and

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VIEW OF THE CAMPANELLO DEL DUOMO

rich effect, rendering the whole, I can well believe, the most elegant, as it is the most celebrated, tower in Italy.*

In the year 1426, the Duomo, or great Cupola, was finished by Brunelleschi,† to whose celebrated name the raising so superb an arch, and hanging it in the air, added new glory; a work of which even the bold and gifted Michael Angelo used to speak with delight. Such was esteemed the difficulty of the undertaking, that years were consumed in consultation upon the subject, and the first architects of England and Spain, as well as those of Italy, were invited to give their judgment concerning it. Among other suggestions, it was proposed, that the structure should be supported on vast mounds of earth, in which, with a view of creating an interest, infusing alacrity in those who assisted, silver and copper coins were to be richly strewed, and become the harvest of those who laboured.

Innumerable plans and models were offered, and equal in number and diversity were the opinions. The parties coincided in one general point, viz. that the ideas given on the subject by Brunelleschi, were those of a madman; and to such a height were the feelings and passions of

* The cupola measures 100 braccia in circumference, and 144 in height. A braccia is nearly three feet.

† This artist was born in the year 1389.

the assembled judges and artists excited, that he was forcibly carried from their meeting, and hooted by the mob as he passed along the streets.

We are told that he was of a most irascible nature, but having long and deeply studied this point, and being certain of his aim, he bore his disgrace with perfect calmness. Accordingly, after the lapse of a short period, overtures to obtain his assistance were renewed, the plans which had been offered being all found in some one point to present insurmountable difficulties; on being earnestly entreated to submit his model to the judgment of the artists, he replied, that he would assuredly consent to place it before the person who should be able to balance an egg on the surface of the smooth marble pavement. The assembled artists, after having for a considerable time, with equal success and gravity, persevered in the attempt, required that he should himself assay it, when, taking the egg,* and striking it against the pavement with a force just sufficient to flatten the extreme point, it stood poised before them; their anger on seeing themselves thus baffled,

* This story is well known as being told of Columbus, and the whole account seems too fabulous to be admitted. It is usually told of Michael Angelo, that being challenged to equal the Dome of the Pantheon, he declared he would not only do so, but would hang it in the air. Hence the Dome of St Peter's. Part of this tale seems here applied to Brunelleschi. These circumstances are detailed in Vasari's Life of Brunelleschi, as also by other authors, writing of this artist.

was vented in reproaches, declaring that if he had explained his meaning, they should also have succeeded as he had done. Assuredly, he replied, as you would also have known how to raise the cupola, had my model been laid before you.

In the accomplishment of this great work, Brunelleschi raised the noblest monument of Florence, seen from afar, giving dignity to the city, and imparting a share of its grandeur to every inferior edifice. This edifice owes much to its site, which gives additional magnificence to its antique form, being built in an open space in the centre of the city, and surrounded by houses of various heights and corresponding antiquity. The approach is by a wide street, which in lengthened perspective you see opening into the irregular square, where the Duomo stands. The extreme length, or shaft of the church, which is divided into a nave and two aisles, is 260 braccia. The nave, opening up into the cross and tribune, presenting a length of 166 braccia, is 78 braccia in width; the two aisles are 48. The circuit of the church measures 1280 braccia; the cupola, 154; the lantern, which was finished 1465, 36 braccia.

Formerly the great front was purely Gothic, where, in vast niches, stood the four statues of the Evangelists, larger than life, by Donatello, placed there at the period of the building of the cupola; but of all that it may have

lost, we cannot exactly tell. At present, nothing is seen but a wretched front of rudely plastered brick, coarsely painted in fresco, with Corinthian pilasters of seventy feet high; the style of the rest of the fabric is Gothic, and peculiarly heavy and ponderous; no spiry pillars, no rich fantastic fret-work, grouped columns, or fine arched doors, give light or breadth to its aspect; the whole edifice lies before you dismal and heavy, varied only by gloomy marbled pannels, the general pilasters being scarcely distinguishable as such. The great base lines and their arches being limited by tall flat pilasters, admit no opening for high Gothic windows; neither are there slits or curious wheel-like circles for Gothic fret-work, or painted glass.

The cupola, of immense height and bulk, stands up, round and vast; while domes, similar in form, but lower, rising on each side, combine with the small cupolas, forming the façade of the shaft of the cross, to give solidity and fixed grandeur to the whole edifice.

Such is the exterior of the Church of Santa Maria del Fiore, the Duomo of Florence, in which the Church of San Reparata was incorporated. It is more majestic than the Cathedral of Milan, more solemn than the Certosa, with a magnificence arising chiefly from imposing bulk. Many a pile of this majestic nature is justly termed Gothic, though all are so unlike each other; but the

epithet may be regarded chiefly as applying to a particular period of antiquity, the period of romance, of caprice, and varied fantastic forms, before the noble architecture of Greece was revived, and when the art had general character, but no fixed order or determined proportions.

The Duomo does not possess the beauty of lightness, or of elegance, in which respect it differs greatly from the Cathedral of Milan; neither does it possess the friezes, nor rich and many-coloured pannels of the Certosa; yet the character, although so dissimilar in form, belongs to the same class.

The great front exhibits three gates of Gothic architecture, the arches of which are small and much pointed. There are also four lateral entrances, two at each side of the church. The aisles are divided from the nave by ranges of large grouped Gothic columns, with swelling capitals of rustic form, and rich with leaves. Superb arches springing from these, but resting on a firm base, rise to such an enormous height, that in the gloom of the place the columns, and the walls which they support, are but dimly seen.

The vast body of the church, opening into the cross and tribune, which terminates in an octagon form, presents a space of the most imposing magnitude, lighted by the chastened but splendid glare of a richly painted Gothic window. The great altar, standing in the centre, is en-

closed by a circle of double Ionic columns of fine marble, carrying a cornice founded on stylobates: and such is the extent of the space, that at the marriage of Prince Carignani with the youngest daughter of the Grand Duke, the Princes of Turin and Florence, the ambassadors, the officers of the guard, the priests, and all the attendants and splendid gala of a royal marriage, with all the Florentine nobles and English strangers, were ranged within its bounds.

The effect I observed on this occasion produced by the slanting rays of the sun, casting its rich gleams through the painted glass of the Gothic window on innumerable burning tapers, giving them the appearance of thousands of glittering golden stars, was beautiful, rendering the whole coup d'œil striking and splendid.

The marble pannels of the stylobates, which are eighty in number, are filled with histories from Scripture, in basso relievo; the choir, designed and executed in wood, by Brunelleschi, was, in the year 1547, removed for one done in the same manner in marble, by Guiliano, son and successor to Baccio d'Agnolo. The marble is of a reddish colour; and the basso relievos in white, representing tall untoward figures, are executed by Bandinelli, who was engaged in every great work; while the able and talented Benvenuto Cellini, tormented and oppressed by debts not his own, was employed in setting

paltry rings for the Grand Duchess. Bandinelli did not lose his opportunity, but selected this place to set up his statues, and snatch at a hasty reputation, by carving hastily, and pleasing the mob: for what other object could he have in setting on high, as he has done, on the great altar, a vast image of God the Father, as if the God of Nature was to be exalted by the size of the block of marble from which the representation of him is drawn!

This gigantic piece, for which the Pieta of Michael Angelo was displaced, consists of three figures, two of which are too large for statuary, and too small for architecture. It does not represent an oblique or enormous block, carved in rude ages, to give some magnificent idea of a divinity, but statues too large to resemble nature, too bulky to represent the human form, and yet without grandeur; the work conveying no other idea than that of the failure of the artist, and showing in every part how difficult it is to represent unnatural bulk without coarseness. The design is, if possible, worse than the execution: our Saviour, the principal figure in the group, is represented as taken down from the cross, and laid out in a reclined posture, supported by an angel, and mourned by the Almighty. The head of our Saviour rests on the knee of an angel, who is seated in the back ground, and is of an upright slender form,

though without grace, and infinitely too small in proportion to the weight he sustains; while the heavenly Father, in the higher part of the altar, above this mournful group, is seen kneeling amidst large folds of heavy drapery; the right hand, which is cloddish, and much too short, being raised, and the two fore-fingers pointing, seemingly with a threatening action, like the pedagogue of the Niobes.

The head, the eyes, the mouth, and beard of the Saviour, have a fine character; but the body, as it is extended before you, nine feet in length, appears enormous and uncouth; the breast flat, the arms and limbs fleshy, gigantic, and purely material. The left arm, which lies obliquely across the body, is too short, while the hand is coarse and large.

Christ is figured to our minds as the most beautiful of the children of men, mild, retired, sorrowing, waiting another life, preaching God's wide and universal peace, and that he was the messenger of redemption. What a subject for contemplation! and how difficult for the artist to rise to that sublimity of personification! nor can anything be more painful in the Roman Catholic religion, than the continual representations of the crucified Saviour.

Behind the altar stands the Pieta of Michael Angelo, a heroic group, large, but not colossal, and bearing every

mark of the independent spirit and grand style of this great master. It is a sbozzo, or sketch, unfinished from want of marble, or caprice. He cut his figures out of the block, as others would sketch a design upon waste paper, which might prove too small for the intention. There is much grandeur and feeling in the work, and though, like so many of Michael Angelo's marbles, it is but a sketch, it deserves notice.

The subject is the taking down of our Saviour from the cross. The group being composed of four figures, those of our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, Joseph, and an Angel. The whole expression is very touching and mournful. Our Saviour forms the principal figure, and seems to hang suspended in the arms of Joseph, who supports the body from above. The figure of the Virgin is seen assisting under the shoulder to uphold the weight; whilst her face is turned up towards the body. The melancholy of the scene is beautifully represented. The head of Christ rests upon her shoulder; the lengthened form of the body, supported in the arms of the assistants, seems extended by its own weight, while the suppleness and lankness of recent death is finely marked by the manner in which the limbs hang in gentle bendings, and seem falling towards the ground, with the most natural dispositions of the arms, as if affected by every motion. The left arm hangs over the shoulder of the

Virgin, while the right crosses her neck, and rests upon a lesser angelic figure, which might have been omitted without injury to the piece. Joseph, who is bending over the group, and holds up the body, is superfluously coarse. His large-featured grim visage, and square form, enveloped in a voluminous cloak of the rudest stuff, turned back upon the forehead as a monk's cowl, is totally out of keeping and harmony with the other figures. The interest of the piece lies in the melancholy but placid countenance of the Saviour, and the declination of the head, which is lacerated by the crown of thorns, and seems thus to have drooped in the awful moment, when the " vail of the temple was rent, and the sun was darkened."

We might almost say of this work that its charm is in some degree diminished by the very excellence of the artist. The representation is but too faithful. It is hardly imagination ; it seems reality. It is indeed dark and fearful death : but our Saviour's body, even in death, should, if possible, appear immortal.

Every part marks the bold chisel of Michael Angelo ; but aware how much of the character of the hand and arm depend upon the form of the wrist and its prominent bones, he has here, as in all his sketches, caricatured the wrist, as if he were setting his figure for some young pupil, and was fearful lest it should be too feebly marked.

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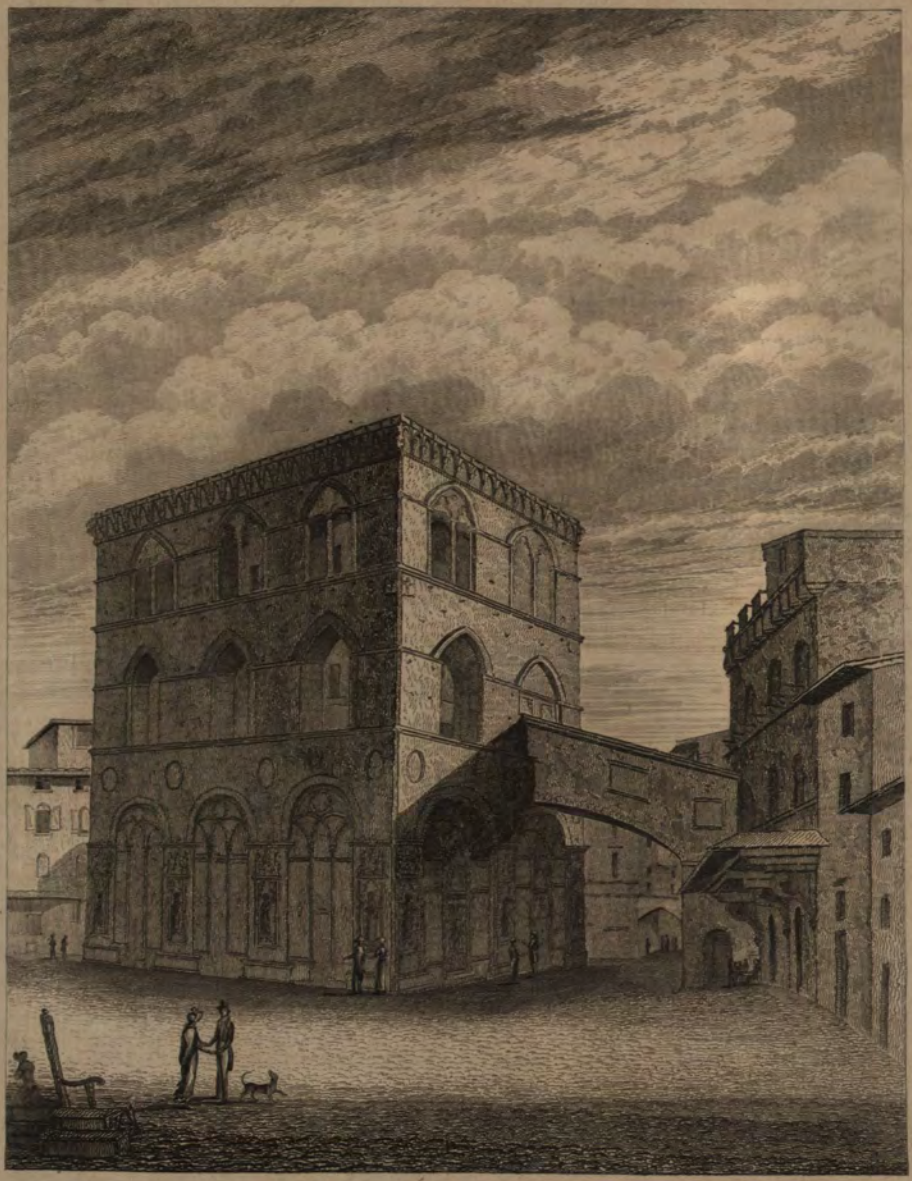
As I wandered this morning through the long aisles of the Duomo, the deep gloom, the stillness, the silence that reigned around, almost insensibly, yet powerfully, awakened painful feelings of solitude and desolation. It is a place where the sun has no cheerfulness, where the day is like a dusky evening, where the sinking of the spirit is inexpressible. As I contemplated the works of other times, and dwelt in idea on the memory of worthies now lying low in the dust, sensations of sadness pressed heavily on my mind; and it seemed to me difficult to say, whether one feels most indifferent to existence, and most reluctant to renew the toils of life's weary round, in the solitude of a church, among the memorials of the dead; or in the brilliant, gay, and trivial assemblies of the living, where men and women lisp something which is hardly to be defined, so wide from nature, affection, or reason, where the same nothingness of human existence presents itself in so many forms, that one is sated and weary, cold and indifferent, and again becomes a mere spectator, to wonder and gaze alone in the crowd.

I was suddenly roused from this train of thought, and my ideas were directed to a new contemplation of the human mind, by the unexpected approach of the custode, or cicerone, who attended me in most of my wanderings in Florence. This person has upon several

occasions particularly attracted my attention; he is a man of no mean talent; one in the vale of years, but on whom time has sat lightly, and who in his day was distinguished as an improvisatore. The fire of youth is now spent; but his deep dark eye still speaks the language of the soul, and the unbroken tones of a mellow and sonorous voice gives a powerful effect to his language.

A stranger listening for the first time to an Italian, excited by an interesting subject, feels, with astonishment, the varied charm and power of the improvisatore. The fine flow of poetic language, the fire that kindles in his eye, as he rises in his narration, strikes on the mind and senses with a sort of electric force. Or if, perchance, he turns from gayer themes to scenes of anguish and terror, the deep pathos of his altered tones, his pallid cheek, his hollow voice, as in lowered and agitated accents he tells the tale of murder, or of sorrow, paints the deed to the imagination with a power that comes to shake the heart with the magic of reality. In my cicerone, or custode, of this morning, chance presented me with a happy opportunity of judging of what may be styled this national gift. While he stood on the transept, resting against the balustrade that encircles the high altar, with animated feature and gesture, he poured out varied descriptions of his country, and of the



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VIEW OF THE TOWER DI SAN MICHELE

Medici; when an increased shade deepening on his brow as he thought of the days of regretted grandeur, he commenced an animated account of the assassination of Juliano de Medici. The language was powerful, and often poetic, and could not fail to arrest the attention.

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ST MICHAEL'S TOWER, OR TORRE DI SAN MICHELE.

There is not a specimen of architecture in Florence more striking than St Michael's Tower. It stands in the heart of the city, near the Piazza del Palazzo Vecchio. It is a building conceived by the dark and gloomy spirit of Arnolfo Lapo; of magnificent size, bearing the form of a tower, but with the dimensions of a palace. Its majestic bulk towering above the walls, is an ornament to the city, and forms a characteristic and combining feature with the grand and severe buildings constructed nearly at the same period and by the same architect.

The Tower of St Michael was begun by Arnolfo Lapo in the year 1204, and constructed for a market place, the grain being displayed for sale under the arcade, the forms of which afford perhaps the finest specimen of that beautiful feature in architecture now so universal in Tuscany, the pillared and vaulted Loggia. The figure of the building is a parallelogram, extending 40 braccia,

or 80 feet in length, 64 in width, and 160 in height. On the front are seen the arms of the republic and of the Guelfs, which marks the preponderating influence of that faction at the period of the erection of this edifice. The lower floor of the tower stood on vast pillars, the building being supported by high Gothic arches. The chambers above the arcade, which are devoted to public offices of the law, register of rights, &c. are lighted by that description of noble Gothic windows afterwards adopted by Michael Angelo, with their fine arches divided through their height, such as are to be seen in the Palazzo Ricardi and Strozzi. Windows of the same form are repeated in the second and third floors, and the tower is terminated by the heavy, deep, projecting cornice of a flat and terraced roof.*

St Michael's Tower was first built of simple uncut stone by Arnolfo; secondly it was re-built, almost entirely, by Taddo Goddi, and he was, in his turn, succeeded by Orcagna, who employed seven years in completing

* An important event has changed the aspect of its pillared base. The arcades for the sale of corn were closed, the sellers and buyers were driven forth, and the space consecrated and converted into a gloomy church. This singular circumstance, though natural enough in this country, was occasioned by a miracle, said to be performed by a Madonna of Uglione, in Sienna. It is believed that by her influence the great plague of 1348 was suddenly stayed. The sensation which this excited, soon conferred celebrity on the image, and thousands flocked to it with rich offerings.—*Note by the Author.*

it. The finest proportions mark the form of the edifice, which, though rude, is noble, deriving magnificence from the vastness of the building, the simplicity of its structure, and the size of the stones composing the pile. This magnificence is to a certain degree like that of the Pyramids of Egypt, and the Palaces of Tentyra. The deep grey tint of the stones, the evident traces of the hammer, the solemn gloom of the structure, its dark square form, the heavy appearance of its towers, and the rude court within, bear marks of the warlike and turbulent times in which it was erected. The whole architecture is marked by the greatest simplicity, excepting only its base, which is very gorgeous. The arches, of an enormous size, are filled in their upper part with beautiful Gothic work in circles; and statues, fourteen in number, stand in deep niches, terminating in pointed cones, and finished with the richest ornaments.

I do not know that I have ever seen statuary unite so well with architecture. The statues are in simple attitudes, and of noble dignified forms; the heads, hands, and drapery, in a grand style, and such as give a high impression of the state of the arts at the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century. Fourteen such statues, large as life, of marble and bronze, surrounding the base of a fine edifice, cannot but produce a magnificent effect. We find here the

works of Montelupo, Donatello, and Ghiberti.* The statues of St Peter, St Mark, of the incredulity of St Thomas, by Andrea Verocchio, as well as St Luke, by John of Bologna, are noble works.

The interior of this church and its chapels little corresponds with the splendour of the miracles attributed to its saints. The light of day, which is nearly excluded, is but poorly compensated by dim tapers and small lamps, whose sickly dull glimmerings, casting uncertain shadows, seem only to deepen the forms of the moving objects within. It may just be discerned that the place is vaulted, that there are a few melancholy-looking priests clothed in black, while some swarthy peasants are cowering in various corners, or kneeling by the steps

* The Viaggio Pittorico mentions these statues as offering one, among many instances, which mark the peculiar nature and disposition of the Florentines, who, however devoted to commerce, still found, in the pursuit and encouragement of the fine arts, a never-ceasing source of interest and delight. These fine works were the result of a decree by the citizens and people, that each trade should bear the expense of furnishing one statue, which should be the protector and supporter of its own profession. St Luke was the work of John of Bologna, at the request of the Jews and the notaries, whom we find upon this occasion coupled together. St Thomas, by Verocchio, for the retail traders. St George, by Donatello, for the cuirass and sword-makers. St Mark, by the same artist, for the carpenters. St John the Baptist, by Ghiberti, for the merchants. St John the Evangelist, by B. di Montelupo, for the manufacturers of silk. St James, by Antonio di Barco, for the tanners. Elijah, by the same, for the handicraft men. St Stefano and St Matthew, by Ghiberti, the first as the protector of the woollen manufactories, the second for the bankers.—*Note of the Author.*

of the altars, which you can just perceive to be of marble, with paintings on the walls. Among the subjects here pourtrayed are, the story of the great plague; our Saviour disputing in the Temple, by Goddi; our Saviour and St John, by Poppi; as also several pictures by Andrea del Sarto—Prophets and Patriarchs, painted by Credi, enrich the ceilings. We also find the whole history of the Virgin Mary told in basso relievo, her holy life, the nativity, the presentation, the marriage with Joseph, the birth, circumcision, and resurrection, down to the moment in which an angel reaches a palm branch to Mary in token of her approaching dissolution. Among the works deserving of attention is a great Altar by Orcagna, something in the form of a baldican, rather tawdry in its ornaments, but its white marble railing is in good taste. The marble friezes in one of the chapels are curiously delicate, with ornaments cut in fretwork, small spires and pinnacles; also twisted and ingeniously carved pillars, interspersed with fine designs in the pannels. The picture of the death of the Virgin Mary is particularly fine. She is laid on a bier, over which an apostle reaches to kiss her hand, whilst Prudence, represented with two faces, attends with other Virtues. There is likewise a superb altar, by St Gallo, of plain marble, adorned by a group of three figures, St Anne, the Virgin, and the Bambino. The countenance of the Virgin bears

no character of holiness, but St Anne is a finely imagined form, a very model for sculptors, betwixt ideal beauty and common nature; a noble figure in the decline of life, conceived full of sorrow, the expression of the countenance mournful and touching, though without beauty. There is much harmony and keeping in the long fine angular limbs, and care-worn face, and the whole is in a noble and simple style.

The impressions excited by St Michael's Tower are heightened by its situation. Pent up by crowded buildings, you approach it in passing through narrow streets and lanes, and look up with wonder on this ambiguous structure, towering above every surrounding edifice. The eye is fascinated by its antique cast, its grand square form, the heavy cornice above, and the rich statues and ornaments which adorn its base; you see in it the style of times long past, but you can refer it to no regular order of architecture, nor any certain age; you know not whether to pronounce it a tower of strength, a castle, a church, or a prison; but it is rich, grand, and singular. Your imagination is yet more impressed, when, after having visited its antique churches and gloomy chapels, gazed on its dusky aspect, its numerous statues, and paintings of ancient times, you ascend to its summit. To reach this height, you wind along steep and narrow stairs, through a narrow region of suffocating heat; and

when, nearly exhausted with fatigue, you at length attain the wide and flat roof of the edifice, and suddenly pass from a dark and close passage into the brightness of day, and the refreshing breeze, which dispenses its renovating influence, you feel restored to life, and sit down to enjoy the beauty of the splendid prospect which is displayed around you. You look down on the busy scene far below, where, in a seemingly little space, you behold all the grandeur of the city, and beyond its walls and gates the varied beauty of the valley in which Florence lies. You see the green hills, with their sunny knolls, spotted with numberless villas, farms, and monasteries, while the blue line of distant mountains seems mingling with the clouds —you look on the flat and dusky valley, splendid in rich verdure, where the Arno wanders towards the Mediterranean—you see the extension of the city, the eye rests on its noble and antique grandeur, and may still trace, by the frequent remains of towers, the first circle of walls, in the earlier times of the republic, when great gates closed on the contending and clamorous population of this little city.

Opposite to you stands an antique house, turretted like St Michael's, and of the earliest times;—not far from this are conspicuous remains of a tower;—and on the next range is beheld all that gives magnificence to Florence,—the Palazzo Vecchio, with its noble tower, the

Prison, the Duomo, the Badia, and the superb Cupola, covering the tombs of the Medici, as also the grand square of Santa Trinita, and the roof of the Strozzi Palace; while, in the extreme circle, the walls and turretted gates of Florence, the long protracted arcades and cloisters of Santa Maria Novella, and of Spirito Santo, give splendour to the scene.

It would seem that St Michael's Tower was destined to be distinguished by great events. In consequence of the expulsion of the Duke d'Atene from Florence, effected in the beginning of the year 1341, on the day of St Ann, one of the presiding saints of this church, an edict was issued, installing her protectress of the liberties of the people, commanding a chapel adorned with the utmost splendour to be dedicated to her, with an order that this day should be held sacred, and commemorated once every year by a solemn procession, which is observed to the present day. The fate of the individual who (to his own sorrow) was the cause of these ceremonies, was no less eventful in itself than important in the annals of the republic.

The Florentines being engaged in war with the Visconti of Milan and the Pisanese, in a struggle for the possession of Lucca, were, by a succession of defeats, foiled in their objects, and, impelled by a spirit not unusual in republics, their disappointment sought relief

in reproaches against their magistrates, and against their leaders in battle, their indignation being more especially directed against their captain, Rimini Malatesta. In this spirit of disaffection they applied to their ally, the King of Naples, who, yielding to their wishes, sent reinforcements, commanded by Gualtiere, Duke d'Atene, a Sicilian Prince. Whether it were to be ascribed to the superior talents of Malatesta's successor, or to the natural consequence of an accession of fresh forces opposed to wearied soldiers, none paused to consider, the result was brilliant; success attended the new commander, he returned triumphant, and was received by the people with acclamations. To a subtle and designing temper, Gualtiere joined an ambitious spirit; cautious and secret in his resolves, he well knew, with the fairest semblances, like our own Richard, to "court occasion with enforced smiles," and fan the flame of public favour. Like him, too, he bore a wicked mind in a forbidding person; he was short, dark visaged, had a scowling eye, and a long scanty beard. But nothing deterred by his uncouth aspect, "so smooth he daubed his vice with show of virtue," and so well versed was he in the arts of flattery, that he rose fast in popular favour. By means of an assumed smile, and affable manners, he so excited the enthusiasm of the people, that they resolved to invest him with the chief power, and, contrary to the republican system, to confer on

him his high distinction for life. To consolidate the fluctuating mind of popular favour, and insure his aim, he called an immediate assembly of the people in the Palazzo Vecchio, not, he said, that he might be elected, but that they might deliberate on the expediency of the measure. The Signori and Council of Ten, the Anziani, the Gonfalonieri, thrown into amazement and terror by this step, earnestly, but in vain, represented to him that, in striving to obtain permanent power, he only courted his own ruin. Republicans, they told him, submitted gracefully when the act was voluntary, but, unaccustomed to shackles, no sooner should they be galled by enforced submission, than, spurning the yoke, they would shake off their abasing chains, and hurl him to destruction. He listened, like Richard, but the people, he said, willed him to have sovereign power, and he must needs abide by their law. The great day arrived, and the whole people assembled in front of the Palazzo Vecchio, when the magistrates, making one last effort, solemnly proposed his election for one year. But sudden and loud acclamations rent the air, and "à vita, à vita!" burst from every quarter. With the same grace as Richard, he yielded to the mighty voice of the people. But so soon, says Machiavel, as he had attained the seat of power, he threw off the mask, and arrogantly triumphing over those who had sought to oppose him, he raised his own

followers to the offices of trust, boldly levied taxes, and enforced loans, showing himself equally regardless of private property, and of public morals. The citizens now saw themselves pillaged by legal authority, their wives and daughters insulted in the streets, and they looked with disturbed and gloomy amazement on the monster they had raised to reign over them. Combinations and conspiracies were soon formed against him, but so strange was the infatuation of the tyrant, that on being apprised by an individual of a plot that touched his life, he condemned him to have his tongue cut out, which caused his death. Not deterred by this act of cruelty, another informer warned him of a similar danger, and his life also paid the forfeit. Gualtiere thought to paralyze action by thus exciting terror at the enormity of his crimes. But he warded off peril only for a time. New and more powerful conspiracies speedily threatened his destruction. The impetus suddenly became general, and the people, who ten months before had hailed him ruler for life, assembling in the same spot, with frightful cries and loud menaces, summoned him to abdicate. Mean in adversity, as insolent in power, he now sought by humiliation to appease the people. But his efforts exciting only derision and contempt, the popular fury soon rose almost to frenzy, and scarcely escaping with life, he was driven forth, covered with opprobrium, a dishonoured

and childless wanderer. Previous to this final issue, a youth of sixteen, his only son, endeavouring, at his instigation, to soothe the people, had perished in the tumult.

From Arnolfo and his celebrated successors, Giotto, Brunelleschi, Donotello, Orcagna, Mosaccio, &c. &c. to Michael Angelo, gradual changes may be traced in the architecture of Florence, which might not prove uninteresting, but which would hardly suit with the general views and slight sketches to which I have limited myself.

PALAZZO RICARDI.

This edifice, from its magnificence, deserves the attention of the artist; exciting interest as being the cradle of the Medicean family, with whom all that was elegant and learned in Florence arose, and as presenting a noble specimen of the mixed architecture, which appeared in the earlier periods of the revival of the arts.

Palazzo Ricardi was erected after a design of Michelezzo, in the year 1431, by Cosmo, styled *Pater Patriæ*, and was the residence of the Medici till the year 1540, when it was abandoned for the Palazzo Vecchio.

As you enter Via Larga, you behold the front of this

fine building, a grand and imposing mass, in a long extended perspective of six hundred and sixty feet. The base, or first stage of the building, rising to the height of thirty feet, is of the Doric order, with a narrow rude cornice, which assimilates well with the massiveness of the whole, and marks its termination.

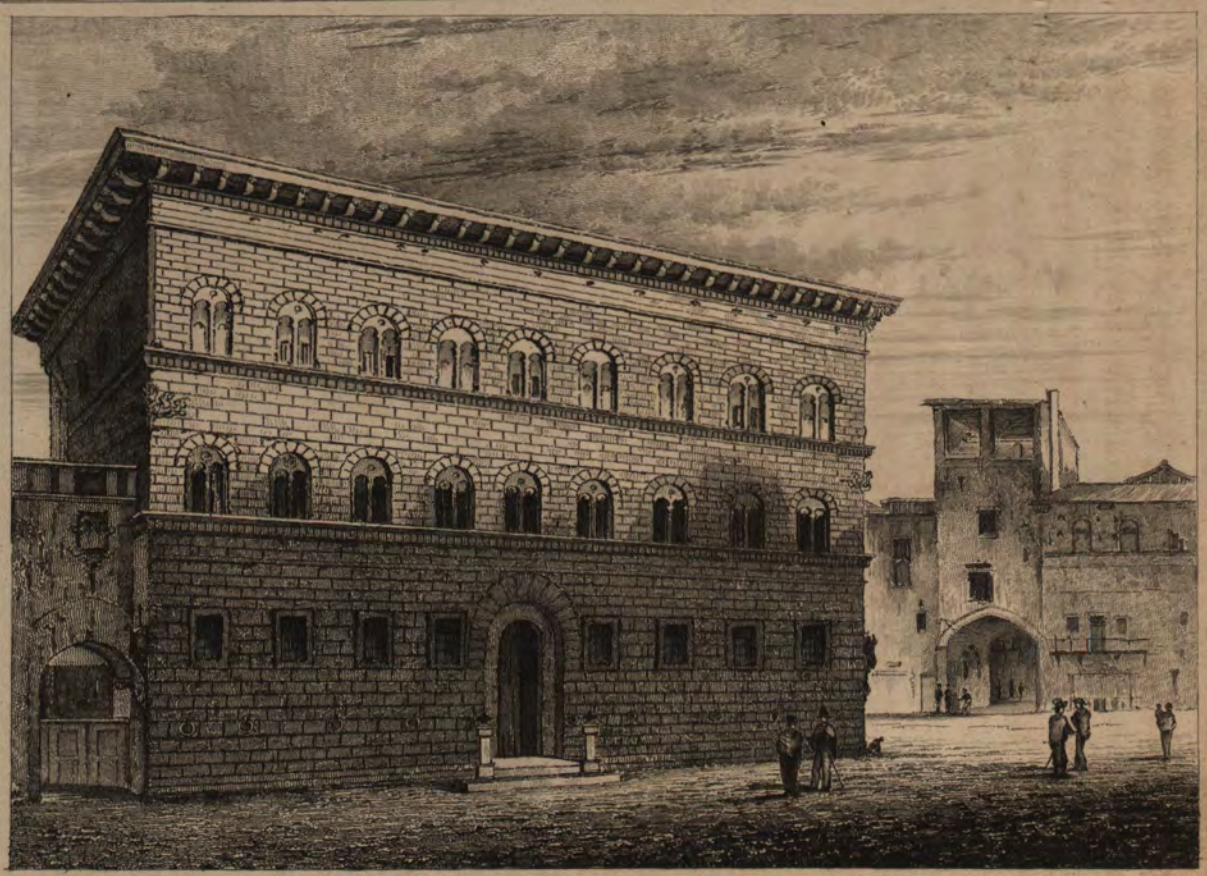
The second stage, or *Piano nobile*, is composed of a finer, or more polished rustic; the windows are arched, and divided in the middle by a small Gothic column, with a Corinthian capital, so that it may be styled the Corinthian disposed in the Gothic order. The third floor resembles the second, having the same arched windows, and mixed architecture, terminated by a bold projecting cornice, giving character and grandeur to the whole edifice. In the original architecture of this palace, the base, rising to thirty feet, presented one unbroken space, entire as a Cyclopian wall, varied only by the projection of the vast and rudely-chiseled stones of which it was composed; the whole bearing an aspect more resembling that of an impregnable fortress, than a princely abode.

This vast space at a later period assumed its present form, being opened with large windows by Michael Angelo. This artist was attached to the Greek architecture; and, except when called upon to improve some of the great and rude works of the earlier periods, rarely

condescended to mix the Greek and Tuscan. He delighted in the purest and most simple forms of the Grecian orders, laying flat pilasters on the fronts of his buildings, and these generally Doric. He never gave in to the gorgeous style, as may be seen in his staircase and hall for the Laurentian Library, crowded, but simple in all its characters; as also in the palace which he built in this city; one of the most simple and chaste designs I have ever seen, for the town residence of a nobleman.

Palazzo Strozzi is a noble edifice of three stories, bearing the gradations in the rustic, similar to those of the Grecian style; namely, strong and coarse rustic work below, finer and more delicate in the second story, polished in the third, and the whole surmounted by a noble cornice.

Palazzo Pitti, now styled Palazzo Reale, designed by Brunelleschi, was originally intended for the residence of a private individual; owing its origin to a principle which had a conspicuous influence on the minds of the Florentines, namely, the desire of commanding respect by the bulk and splendour of their residence. We find the Strozzi avowedly erecting an edifice, the vastness of which should carry down their name with honour to their posterity; and Lucca Pitti, urged by a similar feeling, (though of more immediate fulfilment,) raising Pa-



Gherardi Del.

W.H.Lizars Sculp.

FRONT VIEW OF THE PALAZZO PITTI

B

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND BOMBAY BRANCH

Gherardi Del.t

W.H.Lizars Sculp.t

PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE PALAZZO PITTI

lazzo Pitti, that he might outshine the Medici, the objects of his hatred and rivalship. Many circumstances combined to give celebrity to this palace; the popularity enjoyed at its first commencement, by the projector, was such, that artists and workmen claimed no reward for their services, except that of being styled his friends and partizans; the distinguished name of the chief artist; and lastly, its enormous bulk. But setting aside such impressions, as may owe their source to enthusiasm or prejudice, I should describe Palazzo Pitti as a vast, rude, and shapeless pile; possessing no beauty from proportion, nor distinguished by any peculiarity of character in architecture. The rustic, which gives strength, form, and colour to a base, is in this building carried over the whole front, producing one dull and uniform aspect. The gate is ordinary, and little conspicuous in this solid heavy mass; unvaried by any projection, except a gallery of coarse architecture, which runs along the second floor. The third differs in nothing from the others; nor is it even relieved by the bold cornice, which gives character to so many of the palaces of this city.

The cortile, or colonnade, gracefully branching out from each side of the palace, was erected at a later period by Animannato, and is executed in the finest style, and in the noblest proportions, being equally distinguished for grandeur and elegance. The base pre-

sents a splendid colonnade of magnificent dimensions, with Ionic columns and semicolumns. The second floor is composed of Doric semicolumns, supporting arches, finely drawn, and well executed, over square windows. The third is of the composite order, rich, yet simple. The forms of the whole are varied, classical, and fine; with the exception of the columns, which pass through a sort of jutting square stones, like those of the barriers of Paris. The object of this construction was to produce an assimilation of character with the rustic work of the palace; but it was surely a wretched invention.

In the Quaratesi Palace we find a fine specimen of the composite Tuscan, combining with the grandest character of this order, a well-assimilated portion of the Grecian character. The structure is one hundred feet in length; the doorway high, and finely arched, composed of the coarsest, although not the largest form of rustic work. The first floor is thirty-six feet from the ground; the second (styled *Piano nobile*) rises to sixteen feet above this; and the third has the same dimensions. The windows, nine feet in front, are very magnificent; each is divided in the centre by a slender Corinthian column, supporting a wide-spread arch, which is surmounted by beautifully wrought and wreathed festoons of vine leaves. The cortile is also of good architecture, having composed columns, with rich and curious capitals.

The Palazzo Fossambroni, in Canto Dei Pazzi, offers a conspicuous specimen of the alliance of the Greek and Tuscan style; the lofty and magnificent façade of this edifice being nobly supported by the weight and gravity of the Tuscan base. It has, however, little relation to the Tuscan, except in grandeur of proportion. The forms are square, the front being one hundred and fifty feet in length, and the same in depth. A superb door-piece, arched within, is guarded on each side by huge Doric semicolumns; the balconies are supported by soffits; and the windows, which are magnificent, present a perfect specimen of superb Corinthian architecture. They are finely squared, and grandly ornamented by groups of fabled monsters, which project with a singular boldness of effect from above, being linked or bound together with husks and leaves, in a style of inconceivable richness. Cigoli was the architect of one front; Buontalenti of the other. This palace formerly belonged to the Pazzi.

The Palazzo Saristini, in Piazza Santa Croce, facing the great church, is one of the most elegant palaces in Florence, and an exquisite specimen of ancient architecture, more Grecian than Tuscan. The base is of rustic work, with fine arcades, arched windows, Ionic columns, projecting roof, and elegant cornice.

The Ironi Palace, with its main gate thirty feet in height, and its great balconies, enriched above by the

ornaments of the Greek school, is another example of the result of this combination.

The Palazzo Ucconi, in Piazza Santa Annunziata, affords a beautiful character of improved Tuscan. The base rustic, with a plain balustrade, marking off the first part of the building; the second floor Tuscan; the third Corinthian, which is rather too high for the proportions of the other two; but, with this exception, the whole is fine; and only wants extent of front (being no more than fifty feet) to be grand as well as beautiful.

The Palazzo Paolo Medici is an elegant building; the windows and door-pieces in modern architecture, very rich, and yet most simple, and well worth drawing, as specimens of the Corinthian order.

I have already said that Florence was a city of palaces, and insensibly, in pursuit of my favourite study, I have been led to enumerate a number, encroaching upon the limits to which I have endeavoured to restrict myself. The interior of many of these palaces presents not only fine architecture, but also many valuable works of art; but nothing of that character of splendour, richness, and brilliancy, which prevailed at the earlier period, when the master, with his partizans and followers, had but one interest, and made, as it were, one family.

J. Bell Del.

W. H. Lizars Sculp.

LOGGIA DEI LANZI

LOGGIA DEI LANZI.

In seeking for those specimens of architecture most worthy of attention in Florence, the arcade styled Loggia dei Lanzi, is an object of peculiar interest, from its singular beauty and magnificence. It was usual in the early periods of this republic, and the practice was one in which they followed the ancients, to provide a space close to the government house, or seat of power, where the whole body of the people might meet in one great assembly, to take their share in public affairs, to which they were summoned by the tolling of the great bell of the city.

The space originally allotted by the architect of the Palazzo Vecchio for this purpose, was guarded by a noble railing, but offered no shelter from the weather; to obviate which inconvenience, in the year 1355, the Loggia dei Lanzi was built in one angle of the square. The erection of this edifice naturally excited great interest; and the object accordingly was pursued with that zeal and emulation, which then so peculiarly characterized this people. At the conclusion of many debates, and keen discussions, the design presented by Orcagna, an artist celebrated for his singular attainments in the

three sister arts, architecture, sculpture, and painting, was preferred.

The building presents a magnificent colonnade, or open gallery, consisting of only three pillars, and three arches; but these are large, spacious, and noble. Five steps run along the front on which the platform is raised, with fine effect, giving a certain air of grandeur to the whole. The columns rise out of a short and highly ornamented plinth, on flat clustered pilasters, great and small being bound together, in one vast massive shaft of thirty-five feet in height, terminating in a rich and beautiful capital of the Corinthian order. The shaft proceeds from a curved base, embellished by the arms of the republic, a lion sitting on its haunches. Much elegance and lightness of effect is produced, from the capitals being employed to support a frieze and projecting cornice of elegant proportions, which, rising with an open parapet above the arches, gives a fine square form to the whole building. Between the arches, sculptured in alto relievo, and of fine marble, are the seven Cardinal and Christian Virtues. Statues also line and fill the plinth, from which the columns rise.

One of the chief beauties of the colonnade, and that which most especially excited the admiration of the contemporaries of Orcagna, is the construction of the roof, which, deviating from the practice then in use, of form-

ing the circles into four equal divisions, is composed of half circles, according to the purest Grecian style. This edifice is a superb combination of Greek and Gothic architecture.

The square in which the Loggia is situated, is crowded with statues; a host so numerous, that it might almost be termed disorderly. They are of every disproportionate size and bulk; a gigantic Neptune, a vast and heavy Hercules, a David, large as Goliath, a Perseus delicately slender, a puny Judith, &c. &c. Many among them, however, are fine, and well deserving of particular attention; while the whole command that notice which is due to the works of distinguished masters.

Two noble shaggy lions, antiques brought from Rome, in the year 1788, the size of life, executed in white marble, stand on either side of the porch, as if guarding the entrance; and lining the walls of the arcade are six statues, also antiques, representing Sabine priestesses, of a colossal size, magnificent in attitude and drapery.

In front, under each arch of the colonnade, stand three separate groups, by celebrated masters of the thirteenth century. The first is the Rape of the Sabine; by John of Bologna. This group, which was the last he ever executed, is composed of three figures. A bold and spirited youth is represented as forcibly tearing a beautiful female from the arms of her father, a feeble old man; he

is beaten down, and kneels on the ground, clinging to the ravisher, and endeavouring to rise. The youth, whose figure is formed in the finest proportions, full of strength and manly vigour, not only lifts the young female from the ground, but holds her high in his arms, starting from the grasp of the old man, while she is struggling with uplifted hands, as if to break from his hold.

All this is finely told, and constitutes a group of great merit, which, especially when beheld in a front view, is very fine.

There is, however, a fault in the composition of the work, which is to be regretted, as essentially injuring its beauty. The figures are not well balanced, but rise perpendicularly, one over the other, in a manner that reminds you of an exhibition of strength in a circus; so that, viewing it from a distance, you can hardly conceive how such a group can stand.

The original idea conceived by the artist was to describe the three periods of human existence, youth, manhood, and old age; but he was persuaded to change his intention, and to style the group the Rape of a Sabine.

The base is richly adorned with a basso relievo, finely executed, by the same artist, explaining the subject, and telling the tale of the Rape of the Sabines.

The second, a beautiful statue in bronze, with the

Medusa, is the Perseus of Benvenuto Cellini. He is represented as having just cut off the head of Medusa, which, streaming with blood, he holds up in triumph; his foot is firmly planted on the mangled body of the fallen sorceress; while his right hand, still vigorously grasping the sword, is in a retracted position, ready to strike again, as if the act were hardly done, the danger not yet over. The head with the winged helm is noble, and the countenance princely. The posture is fine, the action full of animation and life, the forms powerful, and free from all affectation of science, in knobs, joints, and muscles. The whole is gracefully simple, and executed with such elegance and beauty of proportion, that, although it is fully seven feet high, it has the effect of a light youthful figure, not exceeding the usual size.

So truly do I admire the Perseus, that I feel unwilling to point out any of its faults; it must, however, be remarked, that the head and body of Medusa are represented streaming with blood, with a revolting exaggeration, which is neither true to nature or good taste; that the fallen body of the sorceress is too much mangled, and uncouthly bundled up below the feet of Perseus; as also that, instead of being thrown on the naked rock, it lies on a velvet cushion.

The third group is that of Judith and Holofernes, by Donotello. This artist possesses a high reputation, but

on the present occasion he has totally failed. The subject is one into which the utmost skill could not infuse interest, but yet might exhibit grandeur or science. Both, however, are wanting, and the work is almost contemptible. Judith is a diminutive creature, represented as cutting off the head of Holofernes, which he lays as coolly and quietly on her lap, as if the story told had been that of Sampson and Dalilah.

OF THE STATUES IN THE SQUARE.

Before the gate of Palazzo Vecchio stand two statues, Hercules, by Donotello, and David, by Michael Angelo. They are of white marble, which receives additional splendour from the dark walls of the palace. The statues are bulky, ill-formed, tame, upright figures; but the names of the sculptors bear a high authority; and we find them accordingly honoured with corresponding distinction, not only in the common guide-books, but in the Viaggio Pittorico, where they are mentioned with high praise. It is, however, added, that Michael Angelo's David was the work of his juvenile years.

The contested spot on which the houses of the Alberti stood, is now occupied by a superb equestrian statue of Cosmo di Medici, first Grand Duke of Florence, by John

of Bologna. He is represented after the conquest of Siena, as entering the city in triumph. The figure is manly, the countenance dignified; he sits his horse with the air of a conqueror, and carries his baton with much grace. The story of the vanquished city is well told, in basso relievo, on the base of the pedestal. The horse is also very fine, although, on first seeing it, the general impression was, that of its being clumsy; but, on a careful examination, I found (with the exception of the belly and hips) that it is exquisitely modelled, and bears to be viewed from every direction, a circumstance extremely rare, and which does great honour to the artist.

On one side of the square there is a fountain, executed after a design of Ammannato, over which a Neptune in a car, drawn by four marine horses, presides; at his feet, seated in a shell, are three Tritons; and on the four higher elevations of the fountain, but subservient to the great marine god, are two male and two female sea deities, in bronze, larger than life. Innumerable lesser statues, with varied shells, and other ornaments, fill and crowd the whole. The Neptune is a colossal statue of nearly eighteen feet in height, a vast and bulky figure, with a grim and surly face, presenting no visible action, except a slight inclination to one side, and a strong look of jealousy at the rival size of his surrounding attendants.

A statue of such enormous size, whether in action, or quiescent, set upright, in splendid white marble, must injure any group of buildings, however fine. Such a composition assumes the place of an obelisk, but without its beauty or lightness. Pyramids, or obelisks, placed in the centre of a city, unless very delicate and slender, should be of granite, or black marble, and their aim that of producing relief to the more massive buildings by which they are surrounded. This vast colossal statue, from its bulk, becomes almost architectural, while its brilliancy assimilates ill with the antique grandeur of the square.

If, instead of being crowded into one place, these statues, classed and arranged, were planted in different quarters of the city, each would have its full effect, and each artist receive his just meed of praise. Even if the zigzag antique forms of this square were to be altered, and its dimensions enlarged, one would be pleased to see Neptune presiding over the bridges, and David and Hercules supporting or defending the immense heavy mass of the Palazzo Pitti.

Gherardi Del.t W.B. Lizars Sculp.t

PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF PIAZZA SAN LORENZE

CHAPTER SIXTH.

CHURCHES—CHURCH OF SAN LORENZO—THE ANNUNZIATA—SANTA MARIA NOVELLA—SANTO SPIRITO—SANTA CROCE—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH—PROFESSION OF A NUN.

CHURCH OF SAN LORENZO.

In proceeding to offer a few observations on the churches of this city, I am induced to select San Lorenzo for my first subject, not so much as the most conspicuous in architecture, as from the peculiar interest it derives from its connexion with the tomb of the Medici, which forms one of its chapels.

In the earlier periods of the republic, San Lorenzo was considered the Metropolitan Church of Florence. Its existence is traced as far back as the year 393, when it was consecrated by St Ambrose; at the distance of nearly three hundred years, on its receiving some repairs and embellishments, this ceremony was again performed by Pope Nicholas the Second in person.

Towards the year 1417, during a grand festival held in commemoration of an union between the Guelphs of Arezzo and the Guelphs of Florence, the church was accidentally set on fire, and nearly consumed. A few years afterwards it was again rebuilt from a design of Brunelleschi.

The whole structure is considered as fine, an opinion sanctioned by Michael Angelo himself; but, according to my idea, its general aspect possesses none of that beauty arising from just proportions, so essential to simplicity and grandeur in architecture. It measures nearly 400 feet in length, and only 100 in width, (not including the chapels,) the body of the church is therefore ungracefully long, while the cross is proportionably too short.

These defects are rendered more conspicuous by the unusual height of the pillars that divide the parts of the church, and which greatly contribute to make the intermediate spaces appear still more narrow. The church itself may be said to possess few claims to admiration; but its chapels are highly interesting. One of these was planned by Cosmo, first Grand Duke of Florence, after a design of Vasari's, being intended as a Mausoleum for the Medicean family. At a later period, the original intention having been partly changed, and the whole enlarged, it was finished under the auspices of his successor, Ferdinand the First. The form of the chapel is octagon, and the

effect produced by its general appearance is striking and beautiful. At the first view, the eye rests with surprise and delight on its magnificence, and its exquisite and noble proportions. The marbles and precious stones, with which it is adorned, are finely varied, giving a rich and glowing harmony of colour, brilliant, yet chaste and simple.

The second chapel, the Tomb of the Medici, grand in its exterior architecture, as seen from every distant quarter of the city, is an object of yet a more peculiar interest, being the repository of those superb monuments of modern art, the celebrated statues of Michael Angelo. The plan of this edifice was conceived by Pope Leo the Tenth, and it was begun in the year 1520; the whole design and execution being committed to the above-mentioned artist. I shall, however, touch but slightly on the architecture of the interior of the chapel, which greatly disappointed me. It is a large square room, formal and unadorned, having regular Corinthian pilasters, and corresponding doors and windows, arranged in that tame flat style of mixed architecture, so unpropitious to the solemn and imposing gloom of a mausoleum. The pilasters are painted of a cold grey colour, while the walls are left entirely of a pure white, the whole being gay, light, and showy, but most unimpressive.

It should have been vaulted, furnished with deep

dark-coloured marbles, and superb brazen gates, while a dim and chastened light, only rendering the monuments of the Medici visible, would have heightened the effect produced by their magnificence.

But from the architecture and ornaments of the chapel, we turn with the deepest interest to the statues of Michael Angelo; till I beheld them, I had formed no conception of the splendour of genius and taste possessed by this artist; they are works which evince a grandeur and originality of thought, a boldness and freedom of design and execution, unparalleled.

Two sarcophagi, those of Lorenzo and Julian, are each supported by two figures. The personification of the Twilight and Aurora guards the remains of Lorenzo, and the Night and the Day those of his brother.

The Crepuscule, or Twilight, is represented by a superb manly figure, reclining and looking down; the wonderful breadth of chest, and fine balance of the sunk shoulder, are masterly, and the right limb, which is finished, is incomparable.

The Aurora is a female form of the most exquisite proportions; the head of a grand and heroic cast, and the drapery, which falls in thin transparent folds from the turban, is full of grace, while, in her noble countenance, a spring of thought, an awakening principle, seems

to breathe, as if the rising day awaited the opening of her eyes.

Day is much unfinished; little more than blocked, yet most magnificent. To have done more would have diminished the noble effect of the whole, which is only heightened by what is left to the imagination. Perhaps none but a mind so gifted as that of this great master could have conceived this, or succeeded in so bold an attempt. Genius is creative; this great artist did not imitate; he meditated, and in his moments of inspiration dashed out the most superb inventions, often imperfect, but always grandly conceived. Doubtless, the unfinished state in which many of his splendid works were left, must have been occasioned by that impatience, so often the concomitant of genius, which, having attained its grand object in striking out splendour of effect, becomes weary, and forsakes the details.

The personification of Night, in sleep and silence, is finely imagined—the attitude is beautiful, mournful, and full of the most touching expression; the drooping head, the supporting hand, and the rich head-dress, are unrivalled in the arts.

There are in this chapel, forming a part of the group, or at least of the subject, two statues of the brothers Lorenzo and Julian di Medici, by the same master. They are both in armour.

The figure of Lorenzo is simple and impressive. The whole character of this piece is marked by a cast of gloomy melancholy, which awakens the idea of his brooding over the fate of his murdered brother; their mutual affection being represented by the writers of the day as having been of almost a romantic character.

The figure of Julian is a noble heroic statue. He is seated, the left hand gloved and raised; the bent forefinger touches the upper lip, which is admirably expressed, seeming literally to yield to the pressure. The helmet, fine in form and proportion, throws a deep shade on the countenance.

THE ANNUNZIATA.

The Annunziata is a beautiful church, of the finest proportions and richest architecture. It consists of a nave only, and is of a long form, in the manner of a cross, with superb pilasters of the finest marble, and gilded capitals of the Corinthian order, supporting a heavy cornice. The side chapels are arched towards the church, the prospect being terminated by a view of the high altar, seated in the great dome, and round which smaller chapels, bearing the same character of arches and of Corinthian pilasters, form a semicircle. The organ

galleries, composed of beautiful white marble, are situated opposite to each other at the end next to the transept; fluted columns, with enriched Ionic capitals, support the tresses which carry each organ gallery, and those form a slight projection over the plane of the church with fine effect.

The forms of the interior of this edifice, with the style and manner of the decoration with which it is embellished, are in the most correct keeping; rich in varied marbles, in architecture, in statuary, in painting, as also in its chapels and its noble dome. The whole coup d'œil is superb, yet the magnificence is without gaudiness, as the high finish which distinguishes every portion is without littleness.

Near the entrance of the church, we find the gloomy but highly ornamented antique chapel of the family Dei Pucci, styled San Sebastiano. The picture of this saint giving the name to the chapel, is by Pollagiola. He is represented bound to a post, and shot at by cross-bows, surrounded by figures in various attitudes. This work is generally mentioned with approbation, yet the whole manner is hard, and the colouring cold.

Passing from this fine antique chapel, you enter into a Cortile, or Cloister, adorned by many superb paintings. There are especially three very fine pieces by Andrea del Sarta. The first is a touching representation of two

little children, one lying dead and the other half raised, recovered by touching the cloak of Saint Philip. In the second picture, the same saint is supposed to have called down lightning from Heaven on some passengers who had returned his admonitions by blaspheming; a tree seen scathed and torn, some figures flying in terror, while two are lying stretched in death. The drawing of one of these, in particular, is very good. The third picture still represents St Philip, here delivering a young girl from evil spirits.

On the other side of the cloister there are also three paintings of superior merit. The first is the Espousals of the Madonna, by Francabajo; the second, the Ascension, by Rosso; and the third, Mary's visit to Elizabeth, by Pontorno. This last is the most entire, the finest of the three, and most superb in composition and drawing. Passing from this into a second cloister, you find some exquisite specimens of fresco painting, presenting an opportunity of judging of the whole power and beauty of which this style is susceptible. One, in particular, is a production in the highest style of excellence. It is a painting which has been much admired by Michael Angelo and Titian, the Holy Family, by Andrea del Sarto, called Madonna del Saco. The form of the Virgin is round and full, yet most youthful, her countenance beautiful, and the drapery rich and in quiet colouring. Joseph,

who is drawn much in shade, is seen in the back ground, sitting on a sack, from which the name of the painting is taken; his beard and harder features contrasting in fine effect with the soft loveliness of the Madonna. The whole composition combines with fine drawing and chaste colouring, the most touching simplicity.

Some paintings by Puccetti, as also by Rossi, are likewise very good. The fresco paintings of these cloisters are in a style of excellence that renders them a school worthy of the attention of the first masters. The compositions are in general fine, the drawings broad, full, and true to nature, and the colouring exquisitely rich, yet not gaudy. The invention displayed in the designs —the varied beauty of the female forms—the gentle bendings and fine roundings of the limbs—with the richness and fulness of the draperies, are truly astonishing; we find, among other subjects, grand and solemn scenes of dying priests, with mourning brethren, meetings of the faithful, penitents received and pardoned, extreme unction administered, or groups of monks and holy men persecuted and sorrowful.

Leaving these cloisters, and returning to the church, you enter, on the left hand, a superb chapel of white marble, in rich Corinthian architecture, after a design by Michaelozzo, the grand altar of which is of solid silver, with a beautiful bronze railing; but the whole is

rather deficient in simplicity. Within th s there is a small chapel, or oratory, composed of the finest marble, with the most delicate workmanship, and an object of interest, at least from the consideration that such things will never be wrought again. The second chapel, called Dei Ferroni, is also very beautiful and rich in sculpture. The figures of St Domenico and St Frances, by Marcellini, have considerable merit, and if, instead of being grouped as they now are, they had stood solitary, and only dimly seen, with the light streaming from above, they would have produced a great effect. In the third chapel there is a picture of the Last Judgment, by Allori, which is held in high estimation. But yet the figures are without action, the faces without expression, and the colouring flat and tame. In the fourth chapel, we find a painting representing the Crucifixion, by Stradone, also much praised, but more deservedly, the composition of this being very fine. The figure of our Saviour is powerfully drawn, while the melancholy, pale, resigned countenance of Mary, who stands with clasped hands at the foot of the cross, has a character of the most touching sorrow. The design, however, is in some degree injured from the crosses of the thieves being placed too near to that of our Saviour, which lessens the solemn dignity of the scene. In the ceiling of the transept of the fifth chapel there is some beautiful painting in fresco by Volter-

ano. The sixth, erected after a design of John of Bologna, is a specimen of beautiful and simple architecture, the columns and friezes are in exquisite proportions, and finely enriched with many small basso relievos in bronze, and with paintings and pieces of sculpture of great merit. The Resurrection, by Ligozzi, forming one of the paintings of the altar-pieces, is very fine. The ceiling in fresco, is also good. Of the works in sculpture, the small statues of three feet and a half are well executed. In the seventh, there is a very fine painting, representing the Blessed, by A. Nannetti. In the eighth, a much celebrated painting, by Passagnano, of our Saviour curing the blind. This is truly a dignified, beautiful, and simple composition. In the ninth chapel, an admirable picture, by Donnini, representing the Virgin and Child, with four other figures.

We find, in the chapel of the Pucci, a very fine votive picture by Lepari, being a portrait of himself, the subject of which is rather singular,—in gratitude for the cure of a wounded leg, he is represented with that limb bound up; but, in spite of this strange conceit, it is a work of great merit. There is likewise to be seen here the celebrated picture, by Empoli, representing the Virgin at the feet of St Nicolo and other holy men. It is painted on yellow ground, after the barbarous manner of Perrugino, but is, notwithstanding, a masterly piece, the drawing is broad and full, and the grouping fine.

Among the works in sculpture in this church, there is one by Bandinelli of considerable merit, and which I am the more willing to praise, having had occasion more than once to censure the chisel of this artist.

The marble in question marks his tomb, which is in the chapel bearing his name, and represents our Saviour taken down from the cross, and supported in the arms and against the knee of Nicodemus. The forms of our Saviour's body are full, round, and fleshy, with much grandeur of manner and style, and without any affectation of anatomy, excepting one stroke, (which, however, is very conspicuous, and consequently injurious,) in the left biceps, which is too rigid. There is also an error in the composition, which greatly lessens the dignity of the whole; the figure of Nicodemus is too small, bearing no proportion to the form of our Saviour; this has the united bad effect of giving an appearance of too great bulk to the body of our Saviour, and consequent feebleness to the sustaining figure. Nicodemus, a well-bearded, square, and rather vulgar personage, is Bandinelli's portrait of himself. Here (says the inscription under the figure of our Saviour) lie the body of Bandinelli, and Giacoba Doria, his wife. He has placed four hideous skulls on the sarcophagus. I have always regarded such quaint, and yet melancholy mementos of dissolution, as remains of barbarism, and unworthy of that good taste and feeling which we expect in a great artist.

There are two fine ornaments in white marble, covering the remains of two holy men, placed in the opening of the circle of the great choir, on each of which, a figure, in the costume of a bishop, lies recumbent, finely executed, and producing a rich effect. Also, in the opening of the circle to the great Duomo, we find two sculptured pieces of great merit; the one a statue of St Paul, the other of St Peter, which last, in particular, is of great excellence. The forms are fine, the position of the head noble, with much of grandeur in the manner and action of the whole. He holds the key in his right hand, with which he touches the Book of Truth placed in his left, as if in appeal to its sacred authority.

The dome of this edifice was erected after a design of Alberti, the historian and poet, and the high altar from one by Da Vinci. The architecture and proportions of both are fine, as are the paintings of the cupola in fresco by Volterrano.

SANTA MARIA NOVELLA.

The external architecture of this edifice presents an uncouth mixture of the Gothic and the Grecian. But within, the grand columns, their elevation, the light and beautiful arches rising above them, the size, height, and vast length of the church, the wide-spread gate, admit-

ting a flood of light that illuminates the whole, are very fine.

Nothing seems to me so necessary, and appropriate, in the excellence of Gothic Cathedrals, as that immensity which makes man feel his own insignificance. The cloisters of this church, composed of fine spreading arches, short octagon pillars, with full expanding capitals, are of beautiful architecture. There is much painting, but all in a style of mediocrity.

SANTO SPIRITO.

The architecture of this church is Grecian, and of the finest Corinthian order, and esteemed one of Brunelleschi's greatest works. But in this edifice, where I expected to be most charmed, I am most displeased with the effect of Grecian architecture in churches. It is appropriate to public edifices, palaces, temples, mausoleums, —to almost any buildings, except churches. I cannot reconcile the tameness, the flatness, the long unadorned sides, and square household windows, with my ideas of solemn and sacred grandeur.

We find in this church the much admired group of our Saviour and the Virgin, by Cecco Bigio, in imitation of Buonarotti's celebrated work on the same subject, now in the Vatican. It is a piece of great merit, and, in point

of anatomy, one of the finest things I have yet seen. The whole figure is finely laid out, and admirably balanced; the proportions are beautiful, the chest broad, and the ribs, loins, and pectoral muscles, most skilfully marked.

The Church of St Mark.—This edifice is in a very different style, less grand, but more beautiful, and well worthy of being carefully visited, not only on account of the works of art to be found there, but also from the splendid and much-admired chapel, styled St Antonino, executed after a design of John of Bologna, which, for architecture, statuary, and painting, is truly superb. In one of the oratories of this chapel, there are two exquisite pictures by Naldini. 1st, the Resurrection of Lazarus; 2d, the Vision of Ezekiel "of the valley of bones," a subject grand and imaginative beyond conception, and finely treated.

Santo Romano Chiesa Ducale.—In this church we find the celebrated picture of Fra. Bartholomeo, styled Misericordia. Our Saviour is represented with an outstretched hand, holding a scroll; the Virgin stands a little lower, and angels sustain a canopy over them, the fore-ground being filled by different groups. The composition is good, and the colouring rich; but the outline is harsh, and the figures as stiff and mechanical as those of Giotto. But the celebrity of this work has

arisen from the portrait of an old woman, of sixty or seventy years of age, which is treated in the finest manner, the features strongly marked, with a keenness of expression inconceivable. There is also here a companion to this piece, painted by the same artist, which has been much admired by West; but it seems to me to possess so little merit, that I am almost persuaded that this great master must have written his critique on report. The Almighty is figured under the form of an old man seated in the heavens, and surrounded by innumerable cherubs; two of the fingers of the right hand are raised, the left holds a book, on one page of which Alpha is inscribed, on the other Omega; below stand St Mary, Catherine, and Mary Magdalene; the ground is of a pale hue, mingling in the extreme line with the blue of the horizon, illumined by a ray of sunshine. The effect of this is most beautiful, and with the landscape, composes all that is precious in the picture. The figure representing the Almighty is stiff, and totally without grandeur; while the same character of hardness in outline, distinguishable in his first piece, is also to be found in this.

SANTA CROCE.

This edifice, which was erected in 1294, by Arnolpho Lapo, offers, in its interior, specimens of the earliest man-

ner, on the first revival of the arts, mingled with portions of the most finished order of the Grecian architecture. The space is divided into three aisles, formed by acute Gothic arches; the pilasters and supporting columns are of the rudest work; while the side-chapels, which, contrary to the usual custom, are not enclosed, but spread out like arched doors upon the walls, were re-built in the sixteenth century, and at that period marked the progress of the arts. The light, dimly penetrating through high narrow windows of painted glass, strikes obliquely against the walls and pillars, leaving a long and dark void below, gloomy and dim, but yet not unpropitious to the grandeur of general effect. The chief sources of interest in this church arise from its paintings and monuments; it may be styled a national depository, sacred to the memory of celebrated men.

Among these there are a few paintings of considerable merit; as also monuments; and some noble works in sculpture. I shall merely mention a very few of the paintings most worthy of notice, and then, in the same cursory manner, take a survey of the monumental and sculptured objects.

The Crucifixion, by Santo di Fito, is very fine; the drawing good, the style full and broad, and the draperies grand.

The Deposition from the Cross, by Cigoli. Our Saviour received into the arms of our Heavenly Father, attended by angels. The composition is simple, touching, and beautiful, the execution masterly, and the colouring pleasing.

The Martyrdom of San Lorenzo, by Ligozzi; a noble picture, of much character and action.

The Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin, by Allori; also a most superb painting, although the composition is somewhat injured by the crowding of the figures in the fore-ground.

A picture, by Cigoli, of God the Father, attended by St John and St Mark; simple and beautiful in its characters; but the colours, though fine, are too much in the manner of Giotto, laid quite flat, on a blue and yellow ground.

Bronzino's Liberation of Souls from limbo. This painting has obtained a name, and is generally mentioned with distinction; an advantage, however, which, I should be inclined to believe, arises chiefly from its imposing bulk. Our Saviour is represented with Adam, Eve, and Isaac; and the fore-ground is filled by Rebecca, and other members of Isaac's family. The countenances of the females are portraits, and extremely beautiful; but this, in my opinion, forms the sole attraction of the picture. The figure of our Saviour is ill drawn, and the forms are without

dignity; while the personages who occupy the space on the other side, are formal, large, and heavy. The whole manner, tone, and colouring, is tame and flat.

I shall conclude this short list, chosen from among the number of paintings contained in this church, with the designs in fresco of the ceiling in the Chapel dei Ricardi, which are exquisite, especially some small designs, representing our Saviour's sufferings and crucifixion, singularly beautiful, and executed with the most touching simplicity, which, though found here, on the ceiling of a small side-chapel, are yet worthy to adorn a royal cabinet.

Among the monumental works, I would particularly distinguish the tomb of Machiavelli, as a noble specimen of the antique style, and a most simple and chaste composition. A statue, representing the combined character of the historian and politician, reclines on his sarcophagus. The whole is after a design of Innocenzio Spinozzi.

The sepulchre of the poet Marzuppini, by Desiderio Settignano, is beautiful, the taste and workmanship exquisite, as well as the figure supposed to represent the poet himself, which reposes on the sarcophagus.

The monument of Alfieri, by Canova. This is a work claiming particular attention, not only from the feelings excited by the memory of him to whom it is sacred, but

also from the interest inspired by a display of the talents of a living artist.

The effect and composition of this work are brilliant. I cannot, however, entirely approve of the manner, which, in my opinion, wants simplicity. Instead of a fine antique square sarcophagus, the whole is in oval forms, one curve rising above another; while the figure of weeping Italy is bulky, and yet wanting in grandeur.

The sepulchre of Michael Angelo is a grand piece of sculpture. His bust, the work of B. Lorenzi, is finely executed, and esteemed a perfect resemblance of the artist. The three mourning figures, representing the sister arts, are the work of his disciples.

Of the great names among the remains deposited in this church, that of Galileo bears a distinguished place.

This great man, though late, yet at length obtained the honours due to his high talents. This tomb was erected by the gratitude and respect of one of his pupils, and the whole accomplished at the private expense of a noble Florentine family. His bust is placed on the sarcophagus, which is supported by two figures, representing the sciences of astronomy and geometry.

Among these monuments there is none more deserving of notice than the sepulchre of Leonardo Bruni, a noble Florentine, by Bernardo Rossillini; the whole composition and manner being in the finest antique style.

I am also led to mention a sculpture in the chapel styled dei Cavalcanti. We find here two figures representing the Annunciation, executed in vitrified earth, by Donatello; as also the Crucifixion, in wood, by the same artist. This last was the first distinguished work by which his talents were made known. We have an interesting account of this fact in his life, where we learn that, in order to surprise Brunelleschi, he pursued his labour in secret, and when it was finished, he asked him carelessly to step in, as he was passing by, to survey his works, when he offered this specimen to his view. On beholding it, Brunelleschi uttered an exclamation of surprise and delight, that thrilled the heart of the artist. This warm, honest, and simple expression of admiration, being the more admirable in Brunelleschi, as the idea of the work had been originally conceived by Donatello, with the avowed intention of surpassing a design of his on the same subject.

In the Chapel dei Nicolini, we find five statues in marble, the work of Francavilla, well deserving of notice. These represent Aaron, Moses, Prudence, Humility, and Chastity. Aaron is a noble work, and grandly designed. He is represented in a meditating posture, fine as the Lorenzo of Michael Angelo, and exquisitely rich in every part of the drapery. Moses is also fine, although inferior to Aaron; the beard, especially, is caricatured, falling in

voluminous rolls to his girdle, so as to produce something of a grotesque effect. The personification of Prudence has considerable merit; the hands (and it is perhaps allowable) are rather large and strong; but the composition, on the whole, is good.

The figure of Humility is very beautiful and well imagined, the countenance mild, and the forms and contour have a gentle and pleasing expression.

The fresco paintings of the ceiling of this chapel are well worthy of notice; they are by Volerrano. He has filled the circles between the windows with the four Sibyls, executed in a noble style—great prophetic forms, in the richest tones of colouring.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Nothing is more touching than the solemn and silent grandeur of a Roman Catholic Church; thither the poor and the distressed, the weary and the hungry, continually resort; and many a lonely helpless being is dimly distinguished in a sequestered corner in fervent prayer. Here every variety of human character may be seen; thoughtless careless youth; the pallid, haggard, unhappy peasant, encumbered with disease; the forlorn widow, bending in sorrow over her little ones; and the aged man, with his bald and shining head, sprinkled with a

few remaining hairs, clasping his hands, and praying for release from life's uninteresting and weary scene.

The habit of penitence, the use of confession, the solitary indulgence of an humble and contrite spirit, carry many a mourning soul to the foot of the altar, kissing the relic to which it is consecrated.

Must not scenes like these make painters? Can these fine figures, touched by the fading gleams darting from the richly-painted window, fail of impressing a mind the least sensible to the beauties of the art?

If vastness and solitude can prepare the mind—if columns and monuments, arches and broken angles, lights descending from above, long perspectives, gloomy recesses, figures rising in a dark ground, can inspire a painter, and affect him with melancholy tender images, the painters of Italy should certainly excel.

PROFESSION OF A NUN.

Among the institutions of the Roman Catholic faith, monasteries form a conspicuous feature. It is impossible, I think, to reflect on the state of beings thus cut off from all the social ties of life, without a sensation of melancholy; a sensation which is more especially awakened to the situation of female votaries, their stricter rules, and

more uninterrupted seclusion, separating them from the world by stronger barriers than those opposed to the other sex.

The profession of a young nun can hardly be witnessed without exciting feelings of strong emotion. To behold a being in the early dawn of youth, about to forsake the world, while its joys alone are painted to the imagination, and sorrow, yet untasted, seems far distant —to see her, with solemn vows, cross that threshold, which may not again be repassed, and which separates her for ever from all those scenes that give interest, and delight, and joy to life—to imagine her in the lonely cell that is to replace the beauty and the grandeur of nature, presents a picture that must fill the mind with powerful feelings of sadness.

Such is the illusion, such the sensation inspired by the solemn scene, that I believe that he whose faith hallows, or he whom a different persuasion leads to deplore, the sacrifice, will yet, for the moment, behold it with equal emotion.

The mind, if not more than usually cold, will with difficulty suppress the tear that rushes from the heart, when contemplating, in perspective, the long listless life which lies spread out, in an unvarying form, before her who is thus, for the last time, surrounded by a busy

throng, and adorned with a splendour that seems but to mock her fate.†

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The convent in which we were now to behold this ceremony belongs to an austere order, styled "Lume Iacra," having severe regulations, enforcing silence and contemplation.

One of their symbols resembles the ancient custom of the Vestal Virgins; like them, they are enjoined to watch continually over the sacred lamp, burning for ever. The costume of this community differs essentially from that usually worn, and is singularly beautiful and picturesque; but, while it pleases the eye, it covers an ascetic severity, their waist being grasped, under the garment, by an iron girdle, which is never loosened.

It appeared that the fortunes of the fair being who was this day to take the veil, had been marked by events so full of sorrow, that her story, which was told in whispers by those assembled, was not listened to without the deepest emotion. Circumstances of the most affecting

† In the Author's notes on Rome, he again touches on this subject, and gives a description of the ceremony of a nun's taking the veil, which the Editor has ventured to introduce here, as it seemed to assimilate well with the above reflections. —*Note of the Editor.*

nature had driven her to seek shelter in a sanctuary, where the afflicted may weep in silence, and where, if sorrow is not assuaged, its tears are hidden.

All awaited the moment of her entrance with anxious impatience, and on her appearance every eye was directed towards her with an expression of the deepest interest. Splendidly adorned, as is customary on these occasions, and attended by a female friend of high rank, she slowly advanced to the seat assigned her near the altar. Her fine form rose above the middle stature, a gentle bend marked her contour, but it seemed as the yielding of a fading flower; her deep blue eyes, which were occasionally in pious awe raised to Heaven, and her long dark eyelashes, gave life to a beautiful countenance, on which resignation seemed pourtrayed. The places allotted to us as being strangers, whom the Italians never fail to distinguish by the most courteous manners, were such as not only to enable us to view the whole ceremony, but to contemplate the features and expression of this interesting being.

She was the only child of doating parents; but while their afflicted spirit found vent in the tears which coursed over cheeks chilled by sorrow, they yet beheld their treasure about to be for ever separated from them, with that resignation which piety inspires, while yielding to a sacrifice made to Heaven. The ceremony now

began, the priest pronounced a discourse, and the other observances proceeded in the usual track.

At length the solemn moment approached which was to bind her vows to Heaven. She arose and stood a few moments before the altar; when suddenly, yet with noiseless action, she sank extended on the marble floor, and instantly the long black pall was thrown over her. Every heart seemed to shudder, and a momentary pause ensued; when the deep silence was broken, by the low tones of the organ, accompanied by soft and beautiful female voices, singing the service of the dead (the requiem.) The sound gently swelled in the air, and as the harmonious volume became more powerful, the deep church bell at intervals sounded with a loud clamour, exciting a mixed feeling of agitation and grandeur.

Tears were the silent expression of the emotion which thrilled through every heart. This solemn music continued long, and still fell mournfully on the ear; and yet seraphic as in softened tones, and as it were receding in the distance, it gently sank into silence. The young novice was then raised, and advancing towards the priest, she bent down, kneeling at his feet, while he cut a lock of her hair, as a type of the ceremony that was to deprive her of this, to her no longer valued, ornament. Her attendant then despoiled her of the rich jewels with which she was adorned; her splendid upper vesture

was thrown off, and replaced by a monastic garment; her long tresses bound up, her temples covered with fair linen; the white crown, emblem of innocence, fixed on her head, and the crucifix placed in her hands.

Then kneeling low once more before the altar, she uttered her last vow to Heaven; at which moment the organ and choristers burst forth in loud shouts of triumph, and in the same instant the cannon from St Angelo gave notice that her solemn vows were registered.

The ceremony finished, she arose and attended in procession, proceeded towards a wide iron gate, dividing the church from the monastery, which, opening wide, displayed a small chapel beautifully illuminated; a thousand lights shed a brilliant lustre, whose lengthened gleams seemed sinking into darkness, as they shot through the long perspective of the distant aisle. In the fore ground, in a blazing focus of light, stood an altar, from which, in a divided line, the nuns of the community were seen, each holding a large burning wax taper. They seemed to be disposed in order of seniority, and the two youngest were still adorned with the white crown, as being in the first week of their noviciate.

Both seemed in early youth, and their cheeks, yet unpaled by monastic vigils, bloomed with a brightened tint, while their eyes sparkled, and a smile seemed struggling with the solemnity of the moment, in expression of their

innocent delight in beholding the approach of her who had that day offered up her vows, and become one of the community.

The others stood in succession, with looks more subdued, pale, mild, collected, the head gently bending toward the earth in contemplation. The procession stopped at the threshold of the church, when the young nun was received and embraced by the Lady Abbess, who, leading her onwards, was followed in procession by the nuns, each bearing her lighted torch.

It might be the brilliant light shed on the surrounding objects, or the momentary charm lent by enthusiasm, that dangerous spirit of the mind deceiving the eye and the heart, which gave to these fair beings a fascination more than real; but such were my feelings, so fixed my attention, that when their forms faded from my view, when the gate was closed, and I turned again towards the busy throng and crowded street, I felt a heaviness of heart, even to pain, weigh upon me.

CHAPTER SEVENTH.

ON ANCIENT STATUARY—THE FIGHTING GLADIATOR—GALLERY OF FLORENCE—THE TRIBUNE—HALL OF THE NIOBES.

On viewing the works of ancient art, we are naturally led to inquire into the causes which produced such early and almost unrivalled excellence in statuary and sculpture. The answer is to be found in the manners of the Greeks, which peculiarly encouraged the progress of talent in these pursuits, and offered the finest opportunities for study. Every ceremony of their poetic religion—the rites observed at their marriages and public festivals—their funeral processions and public games, were so many occasions for rousing talent, and presenting to the artist the finest models for his imitation and study.

This was peculiarly the case with regard to sculpture. In the Olympic games, and other exhibitions of the same kind, where the highest honours were bestowed

upon personal prowess, the artist had the best opportunity of studying the perfection of the human figure. He saw, in these displays of agility and strength, the noblest forms in all the animation of contest; and roused to the greatest exertion by that hope of distinction, which the rewards bestowed on the successful competitor were so well calculated to produce.

But besides this, the artists themselves were honoured and distinguished in a manner unknown in modern times. The riches lavished in rewarding their labours is a matter of history, and personal honours of the highest degree were bestowed upon them. The effect that this must have had in exciting animation and talent is evident.

The nature of their mythology was equally important. In our religion the subjects are grand, noble, and impressive; but almost too sacred for the pencil or chisel. The mythology of the Greeks was, on the contrary, gay and animating. Even while seeking to represent the splendour of the Deity, grand and severe in dignity, the ancients have surpassed us. There is no comparison between the Almighty, by Raphael, and the Jupiter of Phidias, as described by ancient writers. The artist, whether in statuary or painting, owes his happiest efforts to imagination, to which imitation and recollection alone contribute.

When Rembrandt paints a Sorcerer enchanting a Sea God, he paints a being as purely ideal as the Heavenly Father, by Michael Angelo. When Salvator Rosa paints Banditti in a Cave, he in part only copies from what he may have seen; all the horror and effect is produced by the efforts of imagination. Thus, in every subject there is poetry. Composition may be styled the sentiment—the pencil and chisel the language, of painting and sculpture.

The delight of an artist must indeed be infinite in imagining and producing a fine group, or in forming a beautiful and perfect model of the human body. With what fascination does the eye rest on such an object! Such representations command every sympathy. With what interest do you trace the open forehead, the long line of eyebrows, the fine nose giving nobleness to the countenance, the rounded cheek, the square chin, the broad shoulders spreading over the chest in manly grace, the breadth of the pectoral, the rounding of the rutis cruris, the line of the tibia, and especially the head of the bone, where the sartorius passes! In all the fine youthful statues of the ancients, when personal beauty was the object, they were at great pains to represent the head inclined with a sweet expressive air, the neck finely turned, and the breast full and fleshy, as in the statues of Antinous, &c.

It has long been a matter of debate whether the ancients were, or were not, acquainted with anatomy, and the subject, with its various bearings, has been much and keenly agitated by the learned. If anatomy had been much known to the ancients, their knowledge would not have remained a subject of speculation. We should have had evidence of it in their works; but, on the contrary, we find Hippocrates spending his time in idle prognostics, and dissecting apes, to discover the seat of the bile. If more of anatomy had been known than could be seen through the skin, or discovered from a skeleton found on the sea-shore, it would not have been left an imperfect and nearly unknown science. The ancients had no opportunity of becoming acquainted with the formation of the human body, except what might be the result of accident; after death the body was burnt, and the funeral urn contained its ashes. Their emblems of death were not like ours, the representations of the form into which the body is at length resolved; their signs were expressed by mourning genii, with an extinguishing torch. Various instruments of surgery have been found among the innumerable objects discovered in different excavations, as well as in those of Pompeii and Herculaneum, but no specimens nor traces of anatomy.

The ancients kept records of the perfections of the

human body, and these consisted in the aptitude for exercises. At the Olympic games statues were made of those who had been often victors, when the exact size, the peculiar forms, all the beauties, and even the very defects of their bodies, were carefully preserved, that they might serve as models of manly strength, of swiftness, and prowess. When such various peculiarities and practices are carefully detailed, how could a matter so eventful as the first introduction of anatomy, an object so important in its application, be omitted!

It is evident that in these public opportunities the ancients possessed advantages for which the profoundest knowledge of anatomy, even when combined with taste and judgment, can never be a substitute. Anatomy is to a statuary what compasses are to an architect. If the celebrated Torso be that of a Hercules, (as it is supposed to be,) we here find the poetic artist aiming at a beautiful and dignified representation of strength, without any forced or coarse delineation of fibre and muscle demonstrating the signs and actions of anatomy. The bad effects of exaggeration on this point, are demonstrable in the Farnesian Hercules. His coarse, clumsy, vast trunk, loaded with superfluous masses of muscle, his knotted calves, and long ankles, designate the strength of a heavy cumbrous body, calculated to work the lever, or sustain the ponderous weight, which the gift of rude

material forms enables it to raise, but without any portion of energetic powers of action, to struggle, throw, or strike. The stooping head and lowering ferocious eye of this Hercules, his long round forehead, divided across the temples, and separated from his flat, coarse, unexpressive countenance, mark as little of the spirit of grace and animation appertaining to an heroic character, as his bulky fibres do of the first principles of anatomy.

This science should not be brought into evidence in a statue,—it is the beautiful, round, fleshy forms of the living body only, that should be displayed even in high energetic action. Far from exposing naked knotty bones, nature has been indulgent to our finer feelings. The bones, muscles, and tendons, are involved in a cellular substance, and covered with ligaments, the interior machinery is hidden and protected by sheaths peculiar to each limb, while a thick skin covers the whole with one unvaried, smooth, and beautiful surface, which only becomes wrinkled, thin, and meagre, when the machine is to be taken to pieces, and again resolved into its elements.

In youth, round, full, powerful, but light and elegant forms, with a well-nourished skin, hide all individual marks.

The advantages possessed by the Greek artists were not confined to the rude figure alone; their beautiful

living models presented continually to their view a simple, flowing, and ever-varying drapery. A vigorous fine-made Greek, whichever way he cast his cloak, whether carelessly as Socrates, or gracefully as Alcibiades, gave a new cast to the figure, presenting the elegant bendings of youth, or more noble forms of manhood. To represent drapery, finely managed, falling into light and easy folds, is among the most difficult and precious talents of an artist. Perhaps the most exquisite combinations of this art are exemplified in the Apollo Belvidere, displaying a spare and elegant drapery, light, airy, and graceful, giving at once richness and grandeur to the whole figure; and such is the manner in which heroic figures should be clothed. If instead of hanging the skin of the Nemean lion on the resting Hercules, as if it were on a tree, it had been carelessly flung over his shoulders, with the broad and characteristic hanging paw, how noble would have been the effect, compared to the coarse-made forms now presented in this statue!

In a draped figure the most striking effects are often produced by an artist working for particular parts; for instance, a shoulder, a thorax, an arm, a springy trembling thigh, a firm-set foot, a fine-turned head, an expression of nobleness, of fierceness, or strenuous courage, will give singular beauty or character to a whole figure,

provided always the artist is careful to preserve, in his mind's eye, the entire forms of the nude figure.

One circumstance strongly indicating that the chief studies of the Greek artist had been in the Circus, is, that nearly all their male figures are nudes, especially when in action, such as their wrestlers, athletæ, gladiators, and discoboli. The ancients were also particularly well acquainted with one great principle in the fine arts, viz. that exaggerated expression, caricatured violent or strong action, instead of bespeaking the sympathy of the beholder, only weakens the effect, producing disgust rather than pleasure. In representing the most powerful attitudes, they are ever true to nature. The most perfect specimen of this style of composition is to be seen in the fighting gladiator, now in the Louvre in Paris, in which the manner of the ancients is finely exemplified. The figure is in high action, full of grace, in which sinews, tendons, and muscles, are all in play, but hid as in the beautiful forms of youth, not strongly expressed or obtruded on the eye.

A fighting gladiator is not the most noble or feeling exhibition by which to express dignity, passion, or suffering; but this statue is the boldest effort, ever made by any sculptor, to represent the beautiful forms, and high energies, of the human body.

The limbs are thrown out with an animation which

exhibits all their elasticity and youthful strength. The protruded shield repels the foe, and covers all the extended line of the body, which appears ready to spring with a force and action of intense velocity and irresistible power. The head and youthful countenance is turned round to face danger, with a lively and daring animation, which expresses a sort of severe delight in the immediate prospect of it, and foretells the deadly thrust that is aimed, while the right hand and arm are drawn back, strong, and every fibre is ready for the forward and active spring. All the parts, and all the action, even to the extremities, are peculiar, and could not be transferred to any other figure. The effect is confined to no one part, but animates the whole. The fine youthful head, the vigorous limbs, the animated form, strong for action, the lively courage and spirit expressed in every point, the hope and suspense excited from action begun, the result being yet undetermined, give me, in viewing this statue, sensations of admiration and delight beyond what I have ever received from any other work of art.*

In seeking to discover whether the ancients knew anatomy, the importance of the question, as it relates to sta-

* This statue was found early in the seventeenth century at Antium, in one of the palaces of the Roman Emperor. The Apollo Belvidere was found nearly a century earlier in the same place.—*Note of the Author.*

tuary, is not so much to ascertain whether they had this knowledge, as whether it would have injured or improved their works, and in what degree an acquaintance with the science would be advantageous to a modern artist. To the first query I should reply by asking, what need had they of anatomy, who studied so well a surer rule? what could it offer to those, who like them had the means of viewing, in the living body, the most perfect forms of manly beauty? To the second I should answer, that anatomy, skilfully and sparingly applied, is the best substitute for the more animated exhibitions of the circus and theatre.

While I maintain that the statuary who has only anatomy for his master, possesses advantages very inferior to those enjoyed by the spectator at the games of the Circus, I neverthless admit, that a man skilled in anatomy will never produce anything very bad or offensive; his science must correct the eye, although it cannot excite the imagination. I also think that an acquaintance with the great outlines and leading rules in anatomy, would, in any circumstances, prove advantageous to an artist. Polycletus, a man of learning, as well as an able sculptor, wrote a treatise on statuary; and, to give permanence to his rules, formed an exquisitely beautiful statue, demonstrative of the proportions and measures of the human body, which he himself styled the canon,

or regulator, of Polycletus. Every artist should endeavour to teach his eye some canon, and thus have fixed rules impressed on his mind. This might be done with advantage, by setting the nude upright, and carefully observing the fall of the limbs.

In the second stage of his studies, the artist is called upon to observe the changes formed by the bendings of the figure, the consequent swell of muscle, the increased sharpness of the elbow joint, the turning of the hand and wrist-bones, viz. the radius and ulna, the curving of the spine, the projection of the haunch, and flattening of the knee. All this, of course, is so simple, that it requires only letters marking the parts on the clay figure, to render the whole perfectly clear; being the preliminary principles leading to the higher points, those of embodying sentiment, rendering internal feelings and passions visible by exterior forms, which is the primary and great aim of the artist. I should recommend to a statuary, who hopes to rise to excellence, not to practise too long, or assiduously, the modelling in basso or alto relievo. It is a manner chiefly adapted to sketches, being rapid and pleasing, and having an air of delicacy, elegance, and even a touch of antiquity, which renders it too seducing, and may thus spoil his hand, and retard his progress. The clay is so plastic, and so little is required in the filling up, that the artist runs the risk of

being too easily satisfied. There is also danger from working in this manner, of his acquiring a flatness of style. The whole figure may rise boldly from the ground; but still the parts may be flat, tame, and well proportioned only in their length; the artist learns nothing of the balance of the figure, or of the fine, round, and simple forms; he loses sight of grandeur and bulk, or strenuous actions; he is apt also to take delight in a little style, and thus vitiate his taste.

THE GALLERY OF FLORENCE.

The gallery is situated in the upper part of a vast edifice, supported in front by Doric pillars, which were formerly adorned with statues. Perhaps the Florentines more than any moderns have sought to honour and perpetuate the memories of their celebrated men. We have a list from an author, who wrote in the first year of the fifteenth century, recording the names of distinguished poets and artists, whose statues were placed at each gate in the entrance of the city, among whom Dante, Boccacio, and Petrarch are mentioned. Time and chance have caused the destruction or removal of these honourable testimonies of departed worth.

The colonnade formed by the Doric pillars of the Gal-

lery, leads to apartments styled gli Ufzi; after an ascent of two flights of stairs, singularly long, and most precipitous, you reach the landing place, and enter a small vestibule, which opens into the Gallery.

Here you find yourself at once in the midst of the works of art, but so crowded, that they seem deposited rather than arranged; and so mutilated, that your first sensation is that of being surrounded by a rabble of noseless and headless beings, some of which seem to bear the traces only of what they have been, and others are so badly restored, as to cause a regret that they had not shared the same fate.

The difficulty and delicacy of the task of restoration, although generally acknowledged, is, notwithstanding, hardly understood to its full extent.

You must look to the *callida junctura* before you can pronounce on the correctness of the artist's work, and ascertain whether he has given the parts restored their original form and intention.

In this vestibule you find them restored, even to the boar's tail, which being broken in the hurry of removal, in the great fire of the year 1762, is replaced; not, however, according to the brazen copy to be seen in the Mercato Nuovo, which was originally taken from this, and is finely executed, but *ad libitum*. This fine animal deserved more care. It is inimitable. The surly brute

is represented in the attitude of his lair, as if in his den, angry, roused, half rising, and showing his formidable tusks. His hair is stubby and clotted, his paws broad, coarse, and heavy; the whole finely expressing the growling ire kindling in an irritated animal.

The horse of this vestibule is generally noticed with high commendations, and, perhaps, on a slight survey, it may seem to have some merit; but on a closer examination many faults must soon be discovered.

I find in it no preparation for any one part; no forehead to provide for the eye; no socket, nor any bones to project above it; no ribs, only a round tub of a body; no spine, nor rump projecting to mark the crupper, distinguishing the back from the haunches; no preparation for the tail, which is stuck straight out betwixt the hips; none for the mane in the forms of the neck; nor for the legs on proceeding from the haunches; in short, it is a boy's hobby-horse, and, moreover, has been cruelly restored; yet it serves well enough as an ornament to the place. It is imagined that the horse belonged to the Niobes, although upon what grounds is not clearly explained.

The two wolf-dogs are most exquisite; bold, spirited, and true to nature.

Passing through the doorway, which is guarded by these two noble animals, you enter this far-famed Gal-

lery; and here your first feelings and sensations are those of surprise and disappointment.

You look along a corridor, which seems almost interminable, being nearly five hundred feet in length, gloomy, narrow, and with no proportioned height of ceiling to give dignity or grandeur to the general effect. Compared to the Louvre, or Versailles, it appears very mean.

The walls on each side of the Gallery are lined with paintings, furnishing specimens from the earliest times; and the first of these, from the wonderful poverty they display in composition, colouring, perspective, and design, add new lustre to the abilities of the great masters who succeeded them.

From space to space there are statues, the intervals being occupied with busts of the celebrated men among the ancients, with Roman Emperors, and distinguished Roman ladies. The head-dresses of the female busts are worth noticing, being the most whimsical and fantastic things imaginable.

STATUES OF THE GALLERY.

Bacchus and Ampelos. I would distinguish this as an elegant group, particularly happy in that delicate and fleshy turn of the body, which nature gives, and marble

almost always wants, for statues are very generally finished like portraits, from one view; but these figures turn elegantly and easily, as if the result of many combined views. The countenances are sweet and gentle, the persons slender and elegant, with much nature, and no apparent anatomy.

Cupid;—a fair, full, fleshy, round boy, in fine and sportive action, tossing back a heart. But the arm is miserably restored.

A Juno; head superb, the features fine, the expression noble, although severe, and in which something of discontent may be read; the full face is rather heavy, but the profile is truly grand. Statuary should always be round and full; whenever it is minute in its forms, or sharp in outline, even in features, in the eyelids, or in hair, it is unpleasing, and seems poor and common.

Cupid and Psyche. The grouping of the two figures is most exquisite.

Neptune. The head is vulgar and ragged: vulgar, from a contracted cunning expression about the eyes; and ragged, from the manner of treating the hair, viz. pointed and uniform.

Ganymede. Small, beautiful, and exquisite as the subject requires; it is wonderfully full and round for an eighteen-inch statue. The head is not well restored;

it is the work of Benvenuto Cellini, and, contrary to the usual excellence of that master, we find in the nicely blacked pupil of the eye, and various curling of the hair of this Ganymede, more of the finical littleness of the goldsmith than the taste of the artist.

Genius of Death. A mourning angel, very fine; the expression touching and melancholy.

Bust of Antinous; very fine. The size and manner colossal, the hair rude and neglected, composed of massive short locks; the expression mournful.

A Bust; most singularly fine. It is a portrait, with all the truth of a portrait, but without the quaintness. It is exquisitely finished; the hair treated in a most original manner, the beard equally fine. It is wonderful that the history of such a head should not be known.

The Infant Hercules strangling the Serpents. This is a foolish, impracticable, and unpleasing subject; it may suit poetry, but makes execrable statuary; for, although it may be possible for Hercules, the son of Jupiter, to have attained strength to grapple even with a lion, it is impossible to conceive infant strength struggling with serpents, or at least it is impossible to represent such a group with effect. This Infant Hercules is here regarded as one of the finest specimens of antiquity, and by common consent pronounced exquisite. But I cannot agree to this; and not only quarrel with the sub-

ject, but with the statue as a work, the whole figure, in my opinion, presenting only inflated, tumid, and shapeless forms. It appears that the torso is the only portion which is indisputably antique.

The Jupiter. It is singular, although perhaps arising only from the attempt to represent serenity; but the countenance of this statue has much of the expression usually appropriated to our Saviour. This work is much esteemed. It is unquestionably fine, and possesses much grandeur of idea. It has, however, many faults. The forms are too large, the effect of the whole is formal, and the hair heavy and voluminous. If, however, they needs must have a parent god of this size, this may be very good.

The Bust of Alexander. The hair is finely treated in short hard locks.

Pan with the lyre. This Pan, however much it has been praised, is a most wretched figure. It is not hirsute all over, but feathered only on the hips. The shoulders and back show the most absurd use of anatomy; the artist affecting much science, has, notwithstanding, displaced, and even miscounted the ribs; but the posture and action are both good. Statuaries very often fail in the junction of the loins to the body; they do not know how high the haunch-bone comes, and that the navel is opposite to the cresta ilei. There is a strange fault of this

kind in Bandinelli's dead Christ, which becomes slender in the middle like the body of a wasp.

Mercury, very fine. The Phrygian bonnet, hair, and all are excellent, the body finely formed, and the limbs exquisite. In this Deity the ancient artists have best succeeded.

Agrippina. This statue I ever contemplate with renewed admiration; the forms are exquisite, the inclination of the head and neck, the cast of the whole person, the marking of the knees by the fall of the drapery between them, the posture of the right hand, and the graceful ease of the leaning arm, with the richness of the fringes of the drapery, which descend to the feet, are very beautiful. The whole has sweetness, grandeur, richness, and delicacy of work. The original must be very precious; but this, although a copy, is likewise an antique.

The Athlete with the perfumed Vase; very fine, displaying much simplicity of character, and roundness of limb, united to great bulk of muscle and squareness of bones. The clavicles especially are well expressed, and every portion of the work is superior. The shoulders are admirably and delicately rounded, the rotula very square, the tibia clearly defined, the ancle beautiful, being strongly, but not coarsely pronounced. The whole carriage of the body possesses ease and grace, united with

every characteristic expression of strength and energy, —with varied action and beauty of posture, such as the happiest dancer or actor could hardly imitate. The figure bends a little forward, looking with curiosity and pleasure upon the vase, having a gentle inclination on one side, to balance the body, and on the other to support the vase, the vase making a fine connexion betwixt the two hands. In such subjects, and in such direct portraits, the ancients seldom failed, and it is in such points that we discern the peculiar excellence of statuary, as distinguished from painting.

There are four athletic figures in the gallery, fine, but not equal to this which I have described; they are rather coarse, but still display much of the grandeur and simplicity of nature, combined with the characteristic attributes belonging to this cast.

The draped Uranias, &c. are not worth criticising; they are not deserving of a place in this gallery. Bresciano thought all kinds of motion and expression might be intimated by the flowing of the garments;—a theory which has weighed down many an unfortunate statue with heavy loads of drapery. It is indisputable, that unless an artist can bear in mind the precise form of the limbs he is encircling, he cannot drape his figure with effect, nor even with any portion of grace.

The Bacchus of Michael Angelo; superb, although

touched more with the grandeur characterizing the sublimity of that great artist, than the gay, pleasant, careless, debonair spirit, applicable to this God of Joyousness.

Two statues of Esculapius; the second is good. The countenance possesses a certain grandeur of cast, which, although mingled with something of severity in the expression, is dignified and noble. The drapery flows with much simplicity and grace. This statue seems to have been one of a group probably with Hygeia, something of the forms of a female hand being to be traced on the left shoulder.

Laocoon, the Priest of Apollo. This work, to my feelings, is a caricature representation of a subject in itself equally unpleasing and shocking. It is as if an artist should undertake to represent, as a public spectacle, the tortures of the Inquisition. I can never contemplate this group without something of horror, mingled with disgust; and I also think that much of the interest that it might command is destroyed, from the forms of the two youths, whose countenances and make, instead of exhibiting the charm and helplessness so touching in childhood, resemble only diminutive men.* This statue was copied

* I am fully aware, in these criticisms, of the temerity of opposing the general suffrage in favour of this group. In other works of art (even among the most

from the original in the Vatican, by Bandinelli, and brought to Florence in the year 1550. It was much injured in the memorable fire of the year 1762. It is not well restored; the right arm, in particular, is so badly executed, that it seems as if the arm of the statue had been made of wood, turned in a lathe, and stained to resemble the other parts. How rarely are even the greatest artists successful in restoring!

The Discobolus; this statue is executed in a grand style, the action and anatomy good. He was once numbered among the Niobes; but on his real character being discovered, he was dismissed. The Mars, with the Silenus and Young Bacchus, are noble copies of the antique.

The Hermaphrodite; a most exquisite statue. The figure is recumbent, lying on the skin of a lion; the posture is full of nature; the supple elegant turning of the body, the finely-formed bosom, the rounded limbs,

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admirable,) we encounter a diversity of judgment, but of this piece only one opinion seems to prevail. Virgil represents the brother of Anchises as howling under his agony with all the force and strength of a bull dragged to sacrifice, while, in the hands of the sculptor, his mouth is closed, he writhes in silent anguish, undoubtedly a more dignified picture of suffering, which has in consequence procured for the artist the praise of being more philosophic than the poet. It is not altogether denied, that the youths are executed with a skill less exquisite than that displayed in the Priest of Apollo himself, but this is vindicated as being essential to render the accessaries subordinate to the main object of the group.—*Note by the Author.*

the noble head and countenance, are all beautiful. The whole composition is simple, and free from the slightest affectation of anatomy. Yet I know not if any beauty, any skill, however admirable, can compensate for an exhibition so little consonant with delicacy, and admired only as a fable. The Hermaphrodite, like the Mermaid, may amuse a sportive imagination; but as for imitation, it is out of the question. Such subjects are unsuitable either to statuary or painting.

THE TRIBUNE.

At certain intervals along the range of the gallery, there are large doors, forming the entrance into the different schools of painting, statuary, bronze, &c. one of which, towards the centre of the gallery, opens into the Tribune. I cannot refrain from again repeating how much, in surveying the Gallery, or Tribune, the celebrated repository of the arts, you are led to remember with admiration the apartments of the Louvre, all the splendours of which are in the contrast forcibly recalled to memory. Statues acquire new dignity, and are contemplated with sensations of heightened pleasure, when viewed in rich and noble halls.

The magnificence and the taste displayed in the whole arrangements to be found in the Louvre, are equally

striking and beautiful, while the statues of the Tribune, the most exquisite in the world, are lodged in a mean and gloomy chamber, a dull, tasteless, dreary, and melancholy apartment.

It was built after a design of Buontalenti. The form is octagon, and towards twelve feet in diameter, with a roof rising in the manner of a cupola, but being greatly too lofty, according to true proportion, the apartment seems like a narrow tower, or a deep well; while the space of the whole is so limited, that, as you enter, the four celebrated statues seem close upon you, and you have almost touched the Venus di Medici ere you are aware in whose presence you stand.

The paintings of the Tribune, I acknowledge with regret, have disappointed my expectations; there are, doubtless, some few fine things among them; but yet, in the institute of Bologna, or here in Palazzo Pitti, you will find more of admirable and masterly works, than in the whole of this apartment. There is, however, one source of information here particularly interesting, offered in the opportunity of comparing the works of Pietro Perugino with those of his celebrated scholar; as also the three progressive manners of Raphael. While we look on the works of Pietro Perugino, and contemplate his stiff outlines, his formal erect figures, his cold, pale colouring, his golden ornaments, stars, and glories, we

cannot but wonder at the excellence so rapidly and so early attained by his gifted pupil.*

The paintings of Raphael, to be seen in the Tribune, are—

1st, A Portrait of a Florentine lady, with a cross hanging from her neck, and rings on her finger. In this painting, which is among his earliest productions, much of the cold flat manner of his master may be traced.

2d, Two paintings on wood, the subjects, the Virgin, the Holy Infant, and St John; the manner sweet, but little effective.

3d, John the Baptist in the desert; a full-length figure painted on canvass. The colouring, the expression, and manner, fine.

4th, A Portrait of Pope Julius the Second; most exquisite, with beauty and richness of colouring inconceivable. The artist himself was so pleased with this subject that he copied it several times.

5th, The celebrated Portrait of his Fornarina. Into

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* We are told that Raphael, on first beholding the works of Da Vinci, was struck with astonishment and delight, and at once forsaking his earlier manner, took this artist for his guide. He was born in the year 1483, and died at Rome, having only entered his thirty-seventh year. His death caused so great a sensation, and such regret, that even the Pope himself is said to have shed tears at his loss. His remains, immediately after his first demise, were placed by the side of his celebrated picture of the Transfiguration, and all the people, Vasari tells us, came to admire and mourn.—*Note by the Author.*

the countenance of this lovely woman, he has breathed all the sentiment of his own soul. You perceive that she is no longer in early youth, but full of forms presenting the most exquisite softness and grace; a face on which the eye dwells with delight; its beauty fascinates, while the mind with which it is animated seems to speak to the heart.

6th, St John the Evangelist, by Andrea del Sarto; very fine.

7th, A Virgin Mary, by Guido; the countenance contemplative, the expression soft and pleasing, the colouring good.

8th, Herodias receiving the head of St John, by Da Vinci; a subject often chosen, yet surely most unpleasing. This piece is executed in the artist's best style; the painting fine, the colouring rich, and the expression of the whole powerful. Da Vinci, as if willing to lessen the impression of horror, has rendered Herodias exquisitely beautiful, while he has thrown into the countenance of the executioner an expression savage and ferocious.

9th, Two Venuses of Titian. Although these paintings are so highly esteemed, I cannot bring myself to view them with any portion of the admiration with which they are regarded. One is a portrait of his wife; the other supposed to be that of a Florentine lady.

They are both of the size of life, and may be styled sweet sketches, but only sketches. You see a pallid body, lying on a pale ground, of no beautiful or delicate work; the whole having more the aspect of a thin-washed drawing, than the rich colouring of an oil painting. Those who admire them, maintain that the beauty, languor, and charm infused into the whole composition, especially into that of the Florentine lady, convey the most touching interest to the heart; but I can never be reconciled to such designs. Turning to the opposite side you see the first effort of the great Michael Angelo in painting, and you look upon it with amazement and incredulity, wondering that such a production could at any period have been the work of this great master. It is badly composed, and ill drawn. All the figures in the distance are in Terra Siena, while scarlet, blue, and green, enliven those of the fore-ground, which at the same time presents a confusion of limbs, hands, and arms, that no eye can endure.

STATUES OF THE TRIBUNE.

The Wrestlers; a beautiful little group; but the figures too much under size; delicate and exquisitely finished for the subject, which would rather have demanded the grand dashing style of Michael Angelo. Although I

protest against mere bulk as a representation of strength, I feel, in viewing this group, a strong proof that littleness is inconsistent with grandeur or nobleness of effect. The principal idea, that of struggling and of animated action, is not expressed with sufficient force or power. The heads are simply those of two pretty youths, represented in beautiful white marble, but inanimate, and by restoration made to resemble each other: there is hardly any part in high action. The whole only serves to suggest what might be made of such a subject. It would require (even in seeking only to render the general idea) to be executed on the grand, the broad, and the bold style. In this the slender limbs seem exiles from the body, and, owing to an affectation of anatomy and science, have too much fibre; the heels and toes are too small, the latter too close; the legs of the conqueror are stringy, and quite out of drawing; the peronean muscles run in high ridges along the whole leg; the grasping hands grasp feebly; the raised hand and arm is too short, and not well proportioned, while the arm of the hand on which the subdued figure rests, is without the swell corresponding with the posture; and the countenances evince no spirit nor powerful expression, characteristic of the mutual situations of the combatants. The only really good point of action is where the two thighs meet, and cling and swell by pressure, which is naturally

conceived and finely expressed. The whole may be described as being a nice well-finished little group, but wanting in grandeur, action, and expression.

THE DANCING FAWN.

The ancients seldom, I believe, chose ludicrous subjects; or only inferior artists in brass or metal, were accustomed to this lower style, the grotesque. But the Dancing Fawn does not come under this description: it is allied with their mythology, similar to their basso relievos of fawns, satyrs, and bacchantes, and is rather to be designated by the word sportive, than ludicrous. This statue is perhaps the most exquisite piece of art of all that remains of the ancients. The torso is the finest that can be imagined, the serrated muscle upon the ribs, the pectoral muscle of the breast, the bulk of the shoulder, the swell of the bended chest, the setting on of the trunk upon the flank, the swell of the abdominal muscle above the haunch-bone, the forms of the thigh, and the manner in which its tendons meet the knee, the flatness and nakedness of the rotula, and the fine forms of the head of the tibia, the simple and perfect forms of the legs, the fine joinings of the ancle-bones, and the exquisite finish of the tendons of the feet, and flat points of the toes, make this a perfect and per-

petual study. But there is that in it which might spoil an artist's conceptions. It is all true, but all too much. If it were used as a study, it would serve to correct and purify; suiting well as an anatomical figure, to ascertain the forms, or suggest them; and a good artist, even from this little, dancing, drunken fawn, little and curious as it is, might draw a warrior's limbs in a grand and noble style; the anatomy of the parts would help him to individual forms, if studied judiciously, although, without care and taste, it would obstruct all high conceptions of genius. It is adventurous indeed to differ from so great a master as Michael Angelo, who, when he restored it, must have studied the subject well, and who is even said to have taken the idea of the head and arms from an antique gem. He has given round and fleshy forms to a shrunk and somewhat aged figure, evidently intended for the caricature of drunkenness and folly; having mistaken the design, which is assuredly that of a drunken old fawn, balancing with inebriety, rather than dancing with glee. The limbs are all in a strained and staggering attitude. The action arises not from the exertion of dancing, but from the loss of balance, and a desire to preserve it. The whole body inclines forward in a reeling posture; and there must have been a proportioned bend backwards of the head, to counterbalance the inclination of the trunk. The hands dangling forwards, the chin

protruded, the head thrown back, and the tongue lolling out, in drollery or drunkenness, would have rendered the expression corresponding with the general character of the figure. Buonarroti has given too fresh and full a face for this shrunk, meagre, and dried-up body, which, being without a particle of fat, or any covering of skin, is almost an anatomical figure. We find in it nothing of the round well-nourished limbs, nor of the blood or fleshiness of youth, nor any aptitude for dancing. Instead of the dancing, it should be the drunken fawn. The ancients give many dancing figures, especially in basso relievos; but the forms are always long in limb, yet full of flesh, and round, to show the supple and limber form of youth, combined with all the vigorous bending and elastic spring of the body.

VENUS DI MEDICI.

It is to be observed, that the ancients represented the superb, the dignified, or heroic, as the Niobes, Apollos, above the size of life; while the exquisite and beautiful, as the Venus di Medici, the Hermaphrodite, Cupid, and Psyche, are all small. The Venus di Medici is truly a subject for the little and beautiful, measuring only four feet eleven inches, and four lines in stature. This statue is exquisite in all its forms and proportions, in sym-

metry, in slender, round, finely-tapered limbs, in the joining of the haunch-bone, in the loins—all perfect: how exquisite must it have been in its original state! But this must now be left to the imagination; for it is much injured by the restored parts. Difficult indeed it must have been, to enter into the ideas and feelings of so sublime an artist; and, accordingly, it has been found impossible. There is an affectation in the manner of the restored hands, more especially in the curve of the right hand and arm, that is most unpleasing; yet the whole work, as it presents itself, is most beautiful; and, if such nude figures are to be permitted, nothing can be conceived more exquisite.*

THE KNIFE-GRINDER.

This statue, although not exempt from faults, is most interesting. I am especially captivated with its design, and truth to nature; the posture and whole composition being singularly just and effective. The knife, held in the right hand, touches the grinder; the body, slightly bent forward, is balanced by the resting of the fingers of the left hand on the block; while the head, for which the

* The Venus di Medici was found in the Villa Hadriana, in Tivoli, and was brought to Florence in the year 1689.—*Note by the Author.*

whole forms of the trunk are exquisitely prepared, is turned round. The figure is neither leaning nor resting, but is yet full of nature, the attitude being evidently that of a momentary action. The eyes of the slave are not fixed on his work; the body is inclined, and the head directed to another quarter, clearly implying, that his attention and thoughts are not engaged by his occupation. His bony square form, the strength of the neck, the squalid countenance, the short neglected hair, all admirably express the character of a slave, still more plainly written on his coarse hard hands, and wrinkled brow; yet it is a slave presented with all the fine broad expressions of nature, bearing all the striking features of strength and labour.

The faults observable in this work are the want of a corresponding swell of the muscles in the contact of the thigh and leg, meeting in the crouching posture, also in the joining of the right arm to the body, and that of the triceps muscle in the neck, especially on the left side.

CANOVA'S VENUS.

This statue, designed with admirable simplicity, presents a tall, elegant, bending figure, shrinking with timidity. A light transparent drapery, supported by the left hand on the bosom, which it partly veils, crosses a little

below the right knee, falling down to the marble in easy folds. The countenance is beautiful; the gentle inclination of the body, and attitude of the fine Grecian head, raised, and turning round, as it were, in watchful and apprehensive timidity, is full of grace and sweetness. The whole front view of this statue is exquisitely fine; and, if the forms had been but a little rounder, I think that even the most fastidious critic would have judged that nothing in antiquity could have surpassed, perhaps hardly equalled it. This is not, however, the view in which the artist himself takes his chief pride, nor the spectators the greatest delight; they say he excels in the back. I lament this opinion, because I cannot bring myself to share it. To my idea, the back represents a tame flat line, which, together with a slight degree of too great length in the left leg, may be mentioned as injuring this exquisitely beautiful work of art. In comparing the impressions excited in viewing the rival goddesses of Florence, I should say that the Medicean Venus displays in her whole deportment a mild repose, a tranquil dignity, that leads the mind to forget her situation; while the modest, though captivating timidity betrayed by Canova's Venus, awakens the attention, and excites something of uneasiness, by compelling you to share her alarm. They have done much for this statue, by placing it in a finely proportioned and richly decora-

ted apartment; but I should have done more, and have rendered it an incomparable work of art, by placing the back close to the wall.*

HALL OF THE NIOBES.

In Mr Cockerel's judicious and learned observations on the Niobes, he follows Horace, and admits of only twelve statues, as constituting the number that forms the group. Some contend for fourteen, others for sixteen, many statues having been at different periods selected, as belonging to this celebrated family, and then rejected, as the Discobolus and Narcissus are at present. The truth is, that in a country where the youth delighted in all athletic exercises, and where their artists took their best designs from the Arena, it is difficult to determine what statue is individual, and what grouped. The placing of their statues has been as much a matter of hy-

* The difficulties encountered in travelling caused the loss of some of the MSS. belonging to this work, among which were those relating to the paintings of the Palazzo Pitti. These criticisms met the approval of those literary friends in Florence to whom the author submitted them, having had, with the portion of the work belonging to them, the advantage of having been revised by himself. In consequence of the loss of the above-mentioned papers, it has been thought advisable to mention the Venus of Canova, which would naturally have found a place in the description of the interior of the Palazzo Pitti, among the statues of the Gallery.—*Note by the Editor.*

pothesis as their separate degrees of merit, or the meaning and intention of their artists. Mr Cockerel has displayed much ingenuity in his management of a subject so difficult. This distinguished artist has conceived the whole group placed in the tympanum of a Greek temple. The idea is luminous, and, with the exception of the dying youth, whom he supposes to be laid in the entrance, or threshold, of the tympanum, the whole arrangement is fine. This prostrate figure forms the centre of all that is most admirable and interesting in the group; and, unless it had been entirely displayed, the fable must have remained untold; placed in the situation in question, it would have been overshadowed by the cornice of the edifice, and being hid from the view of those who looked down on the standing figures, the horror and astonishment of the Niobes would be unexplained, and the whole effect lost.

The Niobes constitute the finest and most powerful group in the world, and ought to be lodged in a temple, or mausoleum, executed in a great and noble style. There are, especially, two points which may be regarded as of vital importance in producing effect, viz. grouping, and regulating the light. Planted, as they now are, in a circle, each on his separate pedestal, not only all illusion of design and composition is destroyed, but you are tempted to view and consider them individually as

works of art, a test they will ill bear, many of them being of very inferior merit; and as it is an ascertained point, that they are not all by the hand of the same master, it may be concluded that they can hardly belong to the same group. It is remarkable that the general forms of the draped female figures are somewhat loaded, and rather too uniform.

The Hall of the Niobes is entered from one of the doors of the Gallery, which opens into the centre of the room. Imagine a large saloon, or hall, of an oval form, lighted from one side, painted in cold flat white, with a gilded ceiling; the statues forming a regular circle; the Mother of the Niobes placed in one end, and her offspring disposed on each side, closing the oval opposite to her.

This statue of Niobe presents a large full figure, richly draped; but her garments, instead of falling in careless easy folds, marking the bendings of the body, are heavy and cumbrous, like a profusion of gaudy colouring, which frequently only serves to cover bad drawing. Her youngest child is placed in her arms, and clings to the girdle round her waist; whilst the mother is looking up towards Heaven; by some thought to be in the act of flying, and by others in that of offering up a prayer for the preservation of her only remaining child. The idea excited is full of tenderness; but both the figures are want-

ing in that beauty and elegance so necessary in statuary and painting, to excite and exalt the feelings. The artist has aimed at presenting an august matronly appearance, by an imposing size and bulk; but, though he has succeeded in filling the eye, he has entirely failed in producing grandeur or nobleness. The child in her arms is open to the same criticisms already offered in my observations on the Laocoon. Her figure is that of a diminutive woman, presenting delicate slender limbs, with a small nicely-rounded waist. The foreshortening of the hands, both in the mother and the child, is admirable, and the finest part of these figures.

The statue, which is believed by Fabroni to be Amphion, the father of the family, and by some others the Pedagogue, certainly bears a dubious origin, for it is difficult to pronounce with certainty what character the artist has intended he should fill; but the latter conclusion seems the most probable, as he has not in this figure attempted to describe either the grandeur of the hero, or the tenderness of the parent. The expression is stern, and the forms are coarse. The restored arms are very ill supplied. The artist has placed a sword in his hand. The head is suspected, but the bearded face is fine, the scraggy neck admirably in keeping with the figure, and the entangled straight locks, described by Juvenal as characteristic of the Pedagogue, are in a style on which a modern artist would hardly have ventured.

The female figure, supposed to represent the elder daughter of Niobe, is half kneeling; crouching and bending, as if in tears imploring Heaven, and looking up in terror at the approach of her impending fate. The attitude is finely conceived, and most touching, and the drapery rich, though still too profuse; nor are the forms perfect; the right leg, in particular, is very faulty, it is deficient in outline, and the calf is quite wanting, where it should appear swelling under the drapery. The arms, which are modern, are placed according to truth, but are wanting in beauty of form. The youth, who, although not nude, is less draped than the others, is fine. He has much grandeur of action, and nothing of that tameness and indifference remarkable in many of the other statues of the group; he seems looking with mingled horror and wonder on his dying brother. The right or extended leg is rather too long, especially from the knee, and the formation of the ancle is very faulty.

The figure supposed to look up, as if in angry defiance of the Gods, furnished, in this act of despair, an occasion to the artist to present the varied effects produced by anguish and terror, on the sudden approach of inevitable and overwhelming danger. The figure itself, although striking in its forms and expression, is wanting in grandeur. The foreshortening of the neck is faulty. The visage, or rather the marking of it, for you cannot

see the face, is ill defined. The bone of the leg, which is planted in a posture of stern despite, is too strongly marked, incorrect in the anatomy, and unequal in bulk with that which kneels.

The action of the figure represented kneeling on both knees is fine. His inclined head bends over the wounded or dead body of his brother with an expression of much tenderness, while his hand is raised and presented with the palm outwards, as if to ward off the attack of a second fatal shaft. The whole posture and attitude is noble and touching. The hands, and even the head of this statue, are suspected.

The figure of the wounded or dying youth himself, whom I have described as forming the soul and source of all that is most interesting and admirable in the group, is a most exquisite and finished piece of sculpture. The forms are simple and full of grace; the chest broad and manly; the limbs fleshy and finely rounded; the curling of the hair masterly; and the countenance most beautiful. The figure lies stretched out in death, transfixed by a mortal wound, and dying, not in distorted agony, but in that natural languor which follows the simple loss of blood, when pain is over, when life is fast ebbing, and the eyes are closing in death. The figure, thrown down without violence, and extended without motion, seems still full of life and blood; the almost breathing of the

lips, the languor of the eyes, and the exquisite beauty of the face, are unequalled. The artist in this work presents no harrowing images to appal or terrify. As a statue it commands your highest admiration, and as a chaste and mournful picture of death, all your sympathy. A less able master would have sought by a display of the pectoral muscles, and all the strings and knots, such as you find in Donatello, and even in the talented John of Bologna, to remind you of science, when it is a much greater effort to recollect and to fancy nature. The left hand is most exquisite. The right arm, and part of the left leg, are restored. A mournful and beautiful little tale might be told, by selecting three of the figures among these I have described, viz. the kneeling youth, with the hand raised to avert the arrow; the weeping and lamenting sister, with the figure who gazes on the body in horror and amazement. Were these seen surrounding the prostrate body, the group would produce a fine effect.

This statue of the dead or dying youth bears every mark of being the work of a superior and gifted artist, perhaps Praxiteles himself. If it belongs to the Niobes, it must, as I have already observed, have formed the very centre of action and interest in the group.

Guido made the group of the Niobes his study—as much as Michael Angelo did the Torso. It is remarkable how much the intimate acquaintance this great

artist had with the Torso, may be traced in all his productions. This observation has reminded me of the universal belief entertained, and in which I had participated, of his never making any sbozzo or sketch. I have no doubt that this proved frequently to be the case; but it was so far from being his constant practice, that in the *academia delle belle arte*, I found not merely the sbozzo, but beautifully finished little models of his statues in the Medicean chapel. The sketches of the Night and Morning especially, are exquisite. They are done in terra cotta, and are about eighteen inches long.

I must not take leave of the Hall of the Niobes without mentioning two of its most precious ornaments, the battle-pieces of Raphael. They are only sketches, yet, perhaps, deriving a heightened charm from this circumstance, as being a style particularly suiting a subject which exhibits scenes of hurry and confusion. The eye rests on the groups brought forward by brighter tints, while, by degrees, forsaking the more prominent objects. The imagination, insensibly wandering through the indistinct and dusky haze, enveloping the more sketchy parts, traces out new subjects with an increased interest. I visited these paintings frequently; and, captivated with the spirit, truth, and animation which live in their every character and expressio, always viewed them with increased admiration.

CHAPTER EIGHTH.

FLORENCE BY MOONLIGHT—BRETHREN OF THE MISERICORDIA—THE CASINO—FIESOLE.

FLORENCE BY MOONLIGHT.

A RIVER, even in a city that has no trade, still presents a busy and an animating scene. In Florence, the Arno, with its numerous bridges, offers all that is most gay and attractive in the city. Its waters, radiant and sparkling in the mid-day sun, add life to the whole prospect, and when the heat is spent, and night closes in, the landscape assumes a mellower hue, the starry, cloudless sky, and clear pale moon, shining, as it does in these southern climates, with the splendour but of a lessened day. The sensations produced from the continued return, on each succeeding morning, of unchanging lovely weather, is peculiarly striking to those who have been accustomed to the turbulence of a northern sky. You lie down and rise to the same glorious light, and meet again, as evening comes, the same soothing feelings.

A traveller thinks that he has seen a city when he has rolled through her streets, and looked upon her fine edifices and noble palaces. And yet I would not give one solitary midnight hour in Florence, in which I can wander through her deserted streets, see the long perspective, and wonder, at each angle, how the narrow arches, and opposing buttresses, are to open up into other succeeding lines, for whole weeks of idle sights.

My first impressions of Florence have all been by moonlight, in solitary evening walks. The heats of the day are excessive, and as there is no twilight, it is in the serene and silent midnight hour that you love to wander forth, and inhale the cool breeze and freshened air—How beautiful it is to gaze on the splendour of the moonbeams, reflected on the Arno, showing its bridges in grand perspective, the city, and its huge masses of ancient buildings, lying in deep full shadow before you, the rays hardly reaching to the centre of the narrow streets, while they glitter on the tops of towers and buildings, whose projecting square roofs, almost touching each other, rear their ponderous bulk against the clear blue sky.

In such a night as this, (the calm night of a sultry day,) sallying forth, as was my custom, and passing through narrow alleys, I chanced to enter a market-place, chiefly resorted to by the poorer inhabitants of the city.

It was crowded with numbers of this class, who, with famished haste, seemed eager to buy their little stores of provisions, battling and bargaining with clamorous, but good-humoured vociferation; all complaining loudly that the venders demanded too much for their goods; but yet seasoning their reproaches with much drollery and repartee, which, in spite of the sorry, meagre, half-naked figures that were presented to the eye, gave a gaiety inconceivable to the whole scene. Among those composing the different groups, tall finely-formed women with dishevelled hair, pale faces, and care-worn countenances, made a conspicuous part. These, with the venders of meat, their boys, dogs, and men, stalking with bare arms and grisly visages, filled up the picture; while dim and infrequent lamps darkly showed all the dismalness of the place, and the wretchedness of the food they were purchasing.

Among the crowd I distinguished a woman, who, with her little daughter, sat apart, at a distance from the busy, boisterous crew, waiting while her husband bargained for what their necessities required. She seemed poor as the others; but she was beautiful, and presented one of those feeling-touching countenances, which the eye of a painter would have dwelt on with delight; one which Da Vinci might have followed, and such as Carlo Dolce would have copied for one of his Madonnas. The crowd

began gradually to disperse, and I walked along to the more distant precincts, among public buildings, gloomy palaces, and dark walls.

Traversing the great centre of the city, along streets darkened from the height of the buildings, I passed along these immense edifices with strange feelings of solitude, as if in a dream, as if the gay and peopled world had vanished, and these gloomy mementos of the past alone remained. It was night, and in this distant spot not a soul was stirring, not a foot was heard, when, on crossing a narrow alley, the prospect suddenly opened, and the slanting rays of the full moon, falling with a softened light among the magnificent monuments of ancient times, displayed a splendid scene.

At that moment the tower bell of the prison struck loud and long, tolling with a slow and swinging motion, seeming, from the effect of reverberation, to cover and fill the whole city; even in day this bell is distinguished from any I ever heard; but in the dead silence of the night it sounded full and solemn. Impressed by the feelings excited by the grandeur of the scene, I still prolonged my walk, and insensibly wandered on. The silence of night was unbroken, save by an occasional distant sound, arising from the busiest quarter of the city, or from time to time by the song of the nightingale, which reached me from the rich and beautiful gardens

that skirt the walls of Florence, recalling to my mind the voice of that sweet bird, as I heard it when detained in the narrow valley of the gloomy Arco. I remember how its little song thrilled through the long melancholy of the night, a lengthened oft-repeated note, which still came floating on the air like a light sleep.* Involved in these musings of lulled and idle thought, I suddenly beheld in the distance, issuing from the portals of a large edifice, forms invested in black, bearing torches, which, casting a deepened shadow around, rendered their dark figures only dimly visible. Still increasing in numbers, as they emerged from the building, they advanced with almost inaudible steps; gliding along with slow and equal pace, like beings of another world, and recalling to mind all that we had heard or read of Italy, in the dark ages of mystery and superstition. As they approached, low and lengthened tones fell upon the ear; when the mournful chanting of the service of the dead, told their melancholy and sacred office. The flame of the torches, scarcely fanned by the still air, flung a steady light on the bier which they bore, gleaming with par-

* It appears that this recollection had often occurred to the Author; he mentions it more than once, dwelling on the remembrance with a subdued pleasure. It was to him as a funeral dirge, a requiem sung on the borders of that country he was never to repass.

tial glare on the glittering ornaments, that, according to the manner of this country, covered the pall.

I looked with a long fixed gaze on the solemn scene, till, passing on in the distance, it disappeared, leaving a stream of light, which, lost by degrees in the darkness of night, seemed like a vision. The images presented to the mind had in them a grand and impressive simplicity, a mild and melancholy repose, which assimilated well with the hopes of a better world. It seemed like a dream, yet was the impression indelible.

BRETHREN OF THE MISERICORDIA.

In this procession I recognized the sacred office of the Brothers of Misericordia, one of the earliest institutions of priestly charity; and perhaps the only national trait of ancient Florence which now remains. The principles of this order are founded on the basis of universal benevolence. A pure and primitive simplicity marks every feature and act of this fraternity, who, in silence and in solitude, fulfil their sacred and unostentatious offices. The gloom with which their solemn duties invest them, receives new and mournful impressions, from the tradition which connects its origin with the history of the great plague in 1348, celebrated by Boccacio in his Decameron. They relate that many portentous omens

predicted this awful visitation. A dead crow fell from the air, and three boys, at whose feet it had dropped, tossed it towards each other in play. These three boys died, and soon after the plague broke out, and in its fearful ravages desolated the city. During its continuance, a few individuals, firm in purpose and strong in piety, self-devoted, attended on the sick and dying, and the survivors of these chosen few, afterwards taking the monastic habits and order of Brothers of Misericordia, assumed for life the performance of those services which in the hour of anguish and sorrow they had voluntarily fulfilled. Their small church is situated close to the Duomo, the House of God; but all is sad and solemn in the aspect of this institution. It was built shortly after the plague, and was raised on the margin of the gulph dug to receive the dead. A black dress, in which the brethren are attired from head to foot, entirely covers the person and conceals the face. The brother, whether of noble or of lowly birth, is equally undistinguished and unknown, and their duties are performed, and charities dispensed, to the noble or the beggar, with the same indiscriminating ceremonies.

A few tapers on the altar, and at the shrine of the Virgin, burn night and day, throwing a dim and feeble light around. Six of the brethren watch continually; and medical aid is always in readiness. Divine worship

is performed by them in the morning and in the evening, assisted by those individuals whom piety or sorrow may have brought to mingle among them. On the floor are arranged biers, palls, torches, and dresses. The sick are taken to the hospitals, the dead are conveyed to their last home, and the unclaimed brought to their church on a bier, covered by a pall. They are summoned to their duties by the solemn tolling of their deep-toned bell, which, when heard in the dead and silent hour of the night, falls on the ear with dismal and appalling sound. Another office of the Brethren of the Misericordia is to visit the prisons, and prepare the condemned for death. Once a-year, on Good-Friday, this duty is publicly performed. Twelve brethren of the order, and twelve penitents, form the procession, bearing the head of St John on a car, and the image of a dead Christ, covered with black crape. The procession is preceded by solemn music, and closed by a long train of priests clothed in black.

In this institution the numbers are unlimited, forming a wide extended circle, which may embrace members from every city, acknowledging the same faith, bound by one uniting, but secret and mysterious tye. They are not of necessity individually known to each other, but can render themselves intelligible by certain signs and words, in any circumstances requiring communication. Their vow enjoins them to be ready, night or day, at the

call of sudden calamity—to attend those overtaken by sickness, accident, or assault. A certain number of them are in rotation employed in asking charity, a service which they are obliged to perform barefooted, and in a silent appeal, the rules strictly forbidding the use of speech, when engaged in any duty. Their call is never left unanswered, every individual making an offering, were it only of the smallest copper piece, as it is money supposed to be lent to pray for departed souls. This peculiar order, for there are others not greatly dissimilar, possesses a privilege of great magnitude, extended only once in every year, and to one single person. An individual of their body becoming amenable to the laws of his country, in virtue of this privilege, may claim exemption from the penalty, receiving his life at the prayer of his brethren. This ceremony, when it occurs, is performed with every circumstance of pomp and solemnity. The order, habited in the dress of the ancient priests, carry branches of palm in token of peace, and, accompanied by all the imposing grandeur of the church, present themselves in front of the palace of the Grand Duke, when the Sovereign Prince condescends to deliver the act of grace. They next proceed to the President of the Tribunal of Supreme Power. This officer, in person, leads the way, conducting them to the prison, into which they enter, and there receiving their liberated brother,

they invest him in the dress of their order, and crowning him with laurel, conduct him home in triumph.

No fixed period is enjoined for the fulfilment of the vow taken by this order. Many in the highest sphere have sought expiation of sins by assuming it for a longer or shorter time, proportioned to the measure of their crime, or to the sensitive state of their consciences. Princes, Cardinals, and even Popes, have been numbered among their penitents, and have joined in their vows and services.

While dwelling on the picture which this subject presents to the mind, it is impossible not to be struck with the scope given to human passions, in the belief inculcated of a remission of sins, obtained by a few expiatory observances. It is evident that this reliance, instead of being a check to guilty wishes, facilitates their accomplishment. The desired object is first attained, and then penance or propitiation comes lagging after, as time or opportunity may suit. That a being should be driven by the anguish of a lacerated conscience to seek relief in the gloom and solitude of so severe an order, as that of La Trappe and others, must ever appear at once touching and awful; but instances of this nature are rare, and when they do occur, the efficacy of such self-sacrifice must be measured by the degree of restored peace imparted to the wounded spirit. The belief, how-

ever, that a vow fulfilled, an ascetic discipline observed, during perhaps a period of short-lived remorse, can expiate the commission of sin, is a dangerous doctrine.

THE CASINO.

In all foreign cities, from the most insignificant village to the greatest metropolis, we find the public walk considered as an object of primary importance; therefore, in describing points of beauty in Florence, the walk by which it is adorned, styled the Casino, or royal farm, being, perhaps, one of the finest in Europe, is well deserving of mention. It is situated just beyond the gates of the city, by its tall trees and varied pathways offering a deep refreshing shade, and in its extent affording the opportunity of solitude, among rich foliage, even in the busy evening hour, when the assembled throng crowd its wide and splendid walks. In the centre of the Casino, among flowering shrubs and lofty trees, stands a royal rural palace, of simple, plain, but pretty architecture, where the dairy is kept, the vintage gathered, the wine (chief produce of the farm) made, and where also, from time to time, entertainments are given by the court. In the evening hour, these walks are the resort of the whole city; and on Sunday, or on "jours de fete," the scene is gay and rural. Every variety of equipage may

be seen, from the suite of the Grand Duke to the little two-wheeled calash; while the footpaths at each side of the road, under the shade of the trees, are filled with citizens, of every age and class, all well dressed, happy, and placid. A short period of rapid driving is generally succeeded by a universal pause; then the carriages and horsemen assemble in front of the royal building, when nods of recognition, salutations, and inquiries, pass from one party to another, forming a species of conversazione. One side of the Casino is bounded by the Arno, which here runs with a stronger current, enlivened by the frequent little trading vessels which pass to and from Leghorn; while, on the other, the hills surrounding the vale of Arno, rise in beautiful variety, crowned by the noble remains of Fiesole, the parent stock from which Florence sprung.

FIESOLE.

To climb the mountain leading to the commanding site on which this city stood, to admire the distant prospect as it becomes in the rapid ascent more grand and extensive, and then to trace its ancient lines, to contrast its ruined remains with the living beauty, as it were, of the surrounding landscape, suggests matter of deep and varied contemplation. Of the remains now offered

to the eye of the antiquary who visits this spot, to trace the vestiges of the walls which once encircled Fiesole, or to follow in idea the course of the aqueduct, which brought water from Monte Regge to the city, a distance of four miles, or to view its cathedral, presents the chief source of interest; for little else of its former consequence is now visible. The Cathedral, originally a temple of Bacchus, and probably entirely of Grecian architecture, was converted, in the year 1028, into a church, by Giacopo Bavaro. It now exhibits a wild and capricious combination of the Greek and Gothic style; but its aspect possesses a mingled expression of simplicity and grandeur, infinitely pleasing. The gateway and western front are plain and singular, but in a fine pure taste. The entrance is by a descent of two steps, which produces a mournful and gloomy impression. The interior of the church is of magnificent dimensions; the side-aisles are divided from the body of the church by superb granite columns, crowned with ill-assorted capitals of white marble, of the composite order, skilfully varied, but often too small for their columns, as if collected from some more ancient and more magnificent temple. The cross terminates in a semicircular abutment, raised over the crypt or vaulted chapel of the dead. On this plane the great altar is situated, to which a low flight of steps leads on either side; while

through the arches supporting the structure, the eye rests on the chapel below, with its innumerable marble columns, the forms of which are rendered more beautiful and various, from the partial touches of light which, slanting from the windows far beyond in the further end of the vault, fall obliquely along the whole. The ornaments of the altar, the images and tablets, are all in basso relievo; and the capitals of the pillars in fine white marble. In general, the crypt is hidden under ground; but in this cathedral it is seen in fine perspective—a still and solemn sanctuary.

In the fresh evening hour, seated on the mouldering walls of Fiesole, I have, amidst these splendid scenes of Italian landscape, with mingled sensations of saddened contemplation, watched the close of day, and felt, that nothing brings to the mind such lively images of home, or such melancholy recollections of the years that are past, as the sight of the setting sun in a foreign land.

CHAPTER NINTH.

NOTES ON ROME.*

ROME—VIA APPIA—TOMB OF CECILIA METELLA—CIRCUS OF CARACALLA—THE VATICAN—PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON—NOZZE ALDOBRANDINE—STATUES.

ROME.

Rome, with its sweeping Tyber, vast Campagna, and ancient monuments, "where noble names lie sleeping," even in adversity is grand and imposing. Who can sojourn in Rome, full of superb palaces and modern splendour, with a people of the race of those who conquered and enlightened the world,—who can remember it in after-years without mournful, yet pleasing recollections? who can forget that Rome was once mistress of the world, that her power was infinite, her dominion extending over all

* In the following selection from the Author's extensive Notes on Rome, the Editor has been obliged to direct her choice, not so much to that portion which might have proved most interesting, as to those descriptions which are unconnected with any charm of reasoning, and therefore are to a certain degree complete.

the habitable earth, her grasp reaching from the east unto the west? who that has drank of her fountains, and passed through her massive gates, can ever forget the signs of her former greatness? Her peasants sing, around her ruined walls, their evening-song of her fallen glory,

Roma, Roma, Roma, Non è più come era prima.

But, still, it is a city dear and pleasing to all who think and feel. The remembrance of riches or power cannot create this affection; not Venice, with her floating palaces—nor Florence, with her eastern wealth—not Bussora, Bagdad, Palmyra, Memphis—not all the cities of the east, leave behind that pleasing melancholy, which strangers feel in visiting the desolate fields and lonely walls of Rome.

VIA APPIA.

Nothing can more impress the mind with the grandeur of ancient, and the solitude of modern Rome, than the view of the Via Appia, and the Circus of Caracalla, with its long succession of tombs and monuments, terminating in the grand funereal Tower of Cecilia Metella. Passing the Coliseum, majestic in ruins, and the Triumphal Arch of Titus, then winding by the Palatine Hill, crown-

ed by the palaces of the Cæsars, and along the low-lying ground, which skirts the vast towering baths of Caracalla, you reach Porta St Sebastiano, built by the Emperor Aurelian in the year 273, when he enlarged the Roman walls. This magnificent gate, flanked by two great square buttresses, surmounted by massive circular towers, is a noble structure, worthy of being the entrance into the Via Appia.

This road, paved with rude flat stones, bound together with singular strength, and made by Appius Claudius in the 440th year of Rome, reached to Capua, a distance of 95 miles, and was afterwards extended by Julius Cæsar to Brundusium, a city of Apulia.* Its construction affords a remarkable instance of the labour bestowed by the ancients upon their works.

Near to Porta St Sebastiano, and but lately discovered, lie the Tombs of the Scipios, in the vaulted chambers of which a sarcophagus, busts, and several precious inscriptions, now deposited in the Vatican, were found. At a short distance from the gate, in a small vineyard, fine remains are seen of the sepulchres of the freedmen and slaves of Augustus; and particularly of those of Livia, the mutilated friezes and broken pilasters of which sufficiently attest their former grandeur. The walls of

* Now Brindisi, or Brundisi, in terra d' Otranto.

the vaults reach to a height of thirty feet, the whole of which are closely lined in separate apertures, with small fragile-looking earthen vases containing the ashes of the dead. The tablets of inscriptions found here, and now preserved in the Museum of the Campidoglio, are most pleasing; bearing a record of the praises and gratitude of the freedmen and slaves towards their master. Tributes, perhaps, expressive of individual feeling, yet when we reflect on the dispositions of Livia, and the general abject state of slaves,* we are almost tempted to regard the truth of these memorials as being somewhat hypothetical. Conspicuous among these tombs, one stands high, like a rock on the sea-beach, believed to be the sepulchre of Horatia, sister to the surviving conqueror of the Curiatii, who, rendered furious by her lamentations over her lover, stabbed her. The cabin of a poor peasant now stands perched on the ruins, as if to mock this vain memento of death.

That path must be styled mournful, in which, at every little interval, monuments of the dead are seen rising to view; and the Via Appia is almost lined with sepul-

* These unhappy creatures, often tortured, and even suffering death, for the real or supposed crimes of their masters, were treated as their flocks or herds of oxen might have been, inclosed and locked up each night in long dark corridors. Of these the remains are found among the ruins of many of the ancient palaces.

chres, even from the gate of Porta St Sebastiano to the great Circus of Caracalla. The finest and most singular of these is the Tower of Cecilia Metella, erected by Crassus the Triumvir, to the memory of his wife. This magnificent edifice, seated on an eminence close to the road, which rises at this point to an almost perpendicular ascent, bears its honours proudly, still attesting its early and yet surviving grandeur. The dimensions are vast, the form round, rising from a base of enormous blocks of stone, in fine proportions, of fair white marble, terminating above by a circular frieze of peculiar beauty, the ornaments of which are composed of the skulls of beeves, from each of which hang rich festoons of white marble. The massive bulk of the structure, its brilliant whiteness, the elevated site hanging over the deep gully of a powerful stream, and seeming as it were to cover the road as a strong castle of defence, gives it a lofty air of ancient grandeur, singularly fine. During the dark ages, this noble edifice served as a strong-hold, and place of impenetrable strength. At that period, a church and various buildings were erected under its protecting walls, of which scarcely a vestige now remains. It is vast and solid as the Pyramids of Egypt, and in grandeur emulates the Mausoleum of Hadrian.*

* Among the ruins of the interior, the small and dismal vault, in which stood the Sarcophagus containing the ashes of Cecilia Metella, is visible. The Sarcophagus is still preserved, and is now in the Farnese Palace.

From this sacred monument, occupying a beautiful and elevated site, the eye wanders abroad over the distant prospect. Yet, while gazing on the surrounding scene, a feeling of indefinable melancholy depresses the spirit;—every feature is that of lofty grandeur, but mingled with a gloom that insensibly steals on the mind and saddens the heart. In one direction you look to Roma Vecchia, lying lonely and dreary. Amid her mouldering stones, the early breeze whistles over the heathy grass on its brown knolls, and the hum of the insect fly passes unheeded and undisturbed. Far, on the other hand, lies the boundless Campagna, fading indistinct in the dark blue grey of distance; while beyond, Rome, crowded with its innumerable spires, obelisks, and palaces, the splendid Church of St John Laterano, and noble city gate rising high, is presented to view, standing conspicuous, like a pointed rock in the air, receiving an added bulk from its own black shadow, which, as I then viewed it, lay in fine relief behind; while the morning sun streamed over its many statues, pouring down on the landscape below a flood of light. In the distance the noble aqueducts are seen, striding across the plain in vast but desolate majesty. No object on the long waste flat Campagna arrests the eye, which returns to look along the line of consecrated edifices, the massive ruins rising in lofty grandeur, back to the tower of Cecilia.

CIRCUS OF CARACALLA.

Turning from this sacred monument, you enter the Circus of Caracalla, the remains of which are still in some measure entire, presenting the whole scene to the mind's eye, and most forcibly recalling the number, power, and habits, of this singular people. It is situated in a flat field, surrounded by gentle acclivities, the form is a long oval, encircled by a wall, round the base of which ran a flight of ten steps, on which the spectators stood, raised above the arena, to view in safety the danger and tumults of the race. They were protected from the noontide heat by an arch which sprung from the summit of the wall, where the very singular contrivance of lessening the weight of the structure, by the introduction of earthen vases, may easily be traced. A narrow mound, styled the Spina of the Circus, runs from goal to goal, raised to prevent the chariots from crossing the arena. At the entrance of the course, were two lofty gates and towers, whence the signal was given for commencing the race, and under which were placed carceres, or arched ways, where the chariots stood ready prepared The gates were set in an oblique position, so as to give some advantage to the charioteer, placed farthest from the Meta, or centre of the Circus—a point

always decided by lot. Through one of these gates the conqueror passed out in triumph, while, by the other, the dead or wounded were conveyed. The dangers of the course were such as to require the charioteer to guard his head by a helmet, to gird his loins, and protect his chest with mail. Seven heats round the Metæ generally concluded each separate contest. Sometimes, but rarely, there were only two horses harnessed to each chariot; more frequently four, and occasionally even so many as ten. The four colours, as I have already mentioned in describing the admirable Mosaic painting of Lyons, denote the different companies of the charioteers. Each association was supported by its particular adherents, thus giving new ardour and an added excitement to the contention for victory, the whole city being divided into parties. The eggs and dolphin, also mentioned in that piece, were placed high on a pillar, one being removed at each successive course, thus enabling the charioteer to ascertain, by a single glance, the number of rounds he had completed.

Nothing can convey more magnificent ideas of the power and riches of the Romans, and the grandeur of their amusements and public games, than those which were exhibited on this spot. Now, the ground is raised ten feet above its former level, the circular seats are nearly buried, the arches broken, the spina covered, the

gates, the towers, open and in ruins, the palace fallen down, and its noble arches bare. Where thousands were seen rushing on, urged by feelings of joyful animation, all is now still, and on the arena, where the thundering chariots coursed in rapid succession, the long grass grows dank as on the churchyard sod. The sun shines with unabated splendour o'er the low and silent space; but no cheerful sounds are heard—where all was life and animation, the "fox looketh out from her window," and the lizard and the snake glide silently.

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VATICAN.

Perhaps nothing can exceed the noble grandeur of the galleries and courts of the Vatican. Unlike the sombre aspect generally characterizing libraries, museums, and similar resorts of the studious and the antiquary, it is as a world of exquisite beauty, vast, splendid, filled with the most admired works of art, and the most precious marbles. The lengthened vista, the varied perspective changing at each advancing step, the noble architectural proportions still preserved in every new form or dimension of apartment, the lofty iron gates, the beautiful fountains adorning the courts, and cooling the air with the play of their fresh running waters, the white

balustrades, the pillars and magnificent columns, composed of giall' antique, and every richest marble, almost produce the idea of enchantment; and the eye wanders around in eager curiosity, with amazement and delight.

Light is beautiful; and here it is seen, bright and sparkling, reflected from pure and precious marbles; while from the wide-spread windows the most delightful views of Rome, rich with her cupolas, spires, and obelisks, in every varied form of architecture, with her sea-green Campagna, bounded by the dark grey mountains fading in the distance, are presented to the eye. It is the noblest national possession in the world, and should ever be sacred. The mind of man is, I trust, now so well informed, that no barbarous conqueror will ever again dare to touch it with a profane hand.

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St Peter delivered from Prison.—This is a beautiful and perfect piece. The disposition of the figures is wonderfully fine, the action powerful and impressive. It is as a tale told with deep feeling.

The painting represents three subjects: the awakening the saint by the angel, his escape, and the consequent alarm of the sentinels. In the middle division, St Peter is seen through a grated vault, in chains, lying

asleep, and guarded by two Roman soldiers, holding the chains on each side; while the angel occupying the centre, surrounded by a glory illuminating the interior with refulgent brightness, calls on him to rise and follow.

The finely diffused drawing, the bending, graceful, ethereal forms of the angel, himself a pure body of light, the vivid gleams touching the armour, the brilliant glowing colours contrasting with the deep gloom of the cavern, present a scene powerfully effective, and indicating, with unequalled grandeur, the presence of a supernatural being. On the left hand, a beautiful tranquil moonlight scene, with sleeping sentinels, is displayed; on the other side, where the angel leads forth St Peter, his blazing form is seen proceeding onwards, one arm extended, as if piercing through the darkness, while with the other he conducts the saint, on whose countenance the varied emotions of terror, amazement, doubt, and trembling joy, are depicted, with a power and effect so forcible, as to cause an almost breathless interest. Meanwhile, the guards in the back-ground are beheld as if suddenly awakening; the lessened gleam falling on the distant objects, renders, with beautiful effect, the prison, the stairs, and grated windows visible, displaying, in the deepened shade, the alarm and confusion of the sentinels, who, with lighted torches, are hurrying to and fro, in confusion and dismay.

The whole composition of this piece, the beautiful drawing and keeping, is such, that perhaps nothing of human invention can equal it. The colouring, and the art with which the different lights are represented, are most excellent. The bright atmosphere, encircling and irradiating the angel in the prison-scene, contrasting with the heavy gloom of the dark dank cavern, its milder lustre when the angel is conducting the saint through the street, the red glare of the torches, with the effect of the cold, pale, chastened moonlight, are all inimitable.

Nozze Aldobrandine.—This most interesting piece, copied from the original by Nicholas Poussin, is preserved in the Palazzo Doria, where lives his excellency, Italinsky, one of the finest scholars and most accomplished men in Rome, educated in Scotland, speaking all languages, and worthy to represent a great nation. I had heard much of the singular merit of the Nozze Aldobrandine; yet, for beauty, colouring, drawing, and individual composition, I found it far exceeding anything I had imagined. The perspective of the couch, or canopy, is very fine, and gives occasion for the rising a little into action of the furthest figure; the colours of the silks are deep and gorgeous, the drapery in fine drawing, while the shining metal, stucco, and gilding at the foot, has the richest effect. The counte-

nance of the bride, who is seated on the couch, is wanting in spirit and expression; but the bride-maid, or priestess, who officiates in that office, is a noble and striking figure, with a beautiful physiognomy, and turns towards her with the most animated gesture. But the bridegroom is the finest thing I have ever seen. His brown colour gives a singular appearance of hardihood, and token of having grappled with danger, and felt the influence of burning suns. He bears the aspect of a Mexican warrior, a prince, or hero. The limbs are drawn with inimitable skill, slender, of the finest proportion, making the just medium between strength and agility; while the low sustaining posture, resting firmly on the right hand, half turning towards the bride, is wonderfully conceived, implying the habit of every power of action, combined with youthful flexibility; the long protruded left leg, with the much bending of the right, being peculiarly indicative of elasticity. The dark purple garment, gracefully thrown over the middle of the person, is finely done; and the large deep-set black eye, the noble countenance, the oval forehead, the pointed chin, and spirit and expression diffused over the whole, are altogether inimitable. This figure I should without hesitation pronounce to be, in point of composition, posture, and colouring, the most animated and admirable thing I have ever seen. The simplicity and effect of this

central group are indeed truly beautiful, and possess all the power of a painting with the lightness of a drawing. The two lateral groups, placed at each end, not as forming a part in the interest of the piece, but merely as appendages appertaining to the parade of ceremony, are also fine; and it is worthy of particular note, that the female figures, whether representing the matron or youthful form, are all designed with superior taste, the elegance of the drapery resulting as much from characteristic simplicity, as from the natural grace of their persons. The female figures are robed in long vestments, the hair bound up in nets, and the feet enclasped in sandals. A pleasing tone of purity reigns through the whole composition, in which nothing bacchanalian offends the eye, or invades the chaste keeping of the scene.

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STATUES.

THE ANTINOUS OF THE BELVIDERE.—Nothing can exceed the beauty and just proportions of this statue. The balance and living posture of the figure, the expression of repose and elegance diffused over the whole; the fine form and simple attitude, are all most exquisite. The head is small, compressed, and beautifully oval; the shoulders large, without any affectation of manly strength, but

gracefully youthful, the breast wide, but not coarse; and the whole trunk without that insipid flatness in feature, sometimes caricatured by the ancients, and from which even the Apollo is hardly exempt. The thighs fully round, and polished, the legs long, the patella high, as it should be in the limb which is in action, and pointed so as to give a beautiful conic form to the thigh, which only balances the figure, and is quiescent. The ancles are exquisitely formed, with much elegance and precision, and free from strained anatomy. In its entire state this statue must have been fine indeed, and so preserved, would have challenged a place among the most precious works of antiquity. Both arms are wanting, which cruelly spoils the fine symmetry, and greatly injures the just equilibrium of the figure. Among other restorations of the Antinous Belvidere, or Mercury, (the destruction of his attributes throwing an uncertainty on the distinctive appellation,) the foot on which the figure rests, is so ill set on, as to produce a conspicuous deformity. You suspect something of this while looking in front, but are shocked with it, when the statue is viewed in profile; and the whole of this arises from a little thickening of the cement on one side. We are told that Dominichino made the just proportions of this statue his constant study, forming from its general contour and aspect his notions of the beau ideal. Yet, although I much

admire the symmetrical justice of composition in the whole, there is, in my opinion, a stillness of expression, and a something of formality in the immovable sweetness of the countenance, unvaried by the slightest approach to motion, which gives a tameness certainly destructive to the perfection of beauty.

The exquisite polish of this precious morceau adds infinitely to its beauty. This fine finish, and consequent lustre of marble, producing a quality of softened light and shade, bearing, in statuary, a character analogous to colour in painting, is indispensable where the artist's chief aim is directed to the display of beauty in person or countenance.

The MELEAGER of the Vatican affords a remarkable proof of the justice of this observation, the general effect of this celebrated statue being much injured by an absence of this distinguishing feature in the art.

The Meleager resembles the Antinous; but, upon the whole, with some few exceptions, is inferior. The countenance is animated, the eye intelligent, the mouth just opening, the features and expression beautiful, and the action and turn of the head implying reflection, in all of which points he surpasses his rival, whose fine features are fixed and motionless. The animation of the countenance is also well seconded by the action of the body,

which may be defined as a gentle sustaining action. The forms are full, round, and manly, the drapery good, and cast, like that of the Antinous, round the arm, but being joined by the boar's head for support, it is an undoubted Meleager. Yet are the beauties of the design, and fine proportions of this heroic statue, counteracted more than could be imagined, by want of finish, as well as by the absence of beauty in the marble itself, which is not only full of blemishes, but rude and coarse in its surface. The consequences of all this are a flatness and apparent weight and heaviness in the figure, singularly inimical to grace and beauty. As there is no polish, the middle of the thigh, the patella, the shin-bone, the breast, the top of the shoulder, the cheek, the chin, are wanting in relief. It is not unworthy the attention of the artist to note the effect resulting from the careful polishing of all the parts I have just mentioned, which I think he will find producing a character true to nature, and giving them their finest forms.

Cleopatra in the Gallery of the Museum.—A beautiful recumbent figure. The charm and delicacy of the female forms are not in any degree injured by the colossal size of the statue, which requires only to be viewed at a distance, and that not great, to discover the exquisite grace, and fine proportion, for which it is

so eminently distinguished. The figure lies in a reclining posture, supported on one shoulder, the left arm bending round meets the head, which rests on the back of the hand, the fingers and wrist slightly bending under the weight, while the right arm, forming a curve over the head, hangs down behind, as if gently sunk into rest. The throat swells beautifully; the bosom is well delineated, and exquisitely formed, but yet with modesty, and shaded by the interposing drapery, which is gracefully gathered below, by the zone that encircles the finely-turned waist, and falls down the side in rich natural folds, describing the outline of the body. The bending forms, the full, yet delicately rounded limbs, lie in quiescent deep repose, finely expressing the gentle helpless yielding to sleep. Where the thigh begins, the artist, with wonderful skill, has contrived to cross the bands that confine the drapery, so artificially as to conceal the bulkiness of the haunch, a part of the female form in which it would seem beauty and necessity had some contention. From this rich crossing of the bands, the thighs and limbs come out and lie large, long, and full; but with all the delicacy of posture, and feminine flexibility, true to dignity and grace. The head is adorned with thick plaited hair, which forms a circle round the forehead, while a thin transparent veil falls over, gathered in a mass under the sustaining arm. The features

are beautifully feminine, yet full, finely representing all the loveliness of womanhood, and a little oblique as indicating deep and tranquil sleep. Although the drapery covers the whole figure in large rich folds, the female form is exhibited with a distinctness, a grace, and charm, which, so much does female beauty gain by modesty and purity of aspect, far surpasses the effect on my mind produced even by the finest nude Venus; feelings which gain strength while contemplating this statue, so lovely in the confiding, beautiful innocence of sleep, of gentle breathing sleep.

They call this statue a Cleopatra, a Dido; but I cannot approve of converting so general, so fine a form, worthy of a grand poetical design, into a portrait. Let the lady sleep in peace. I am sure it is such a sweet and gentle slumber as the dissolute Cleopatra, or infuriated Dido, never knew. Combined with the above-mentioned distinguished beauties, there is in this statue so fine a character of refined female modesty and tranquil repose, that, as a picture and a poetical representation of sleep, nothing can excel it. The dying Gladiator is perhaps the finest nude, and this assuredly the finest draped figure that exists.

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THE DYING GLADIATOR.—A most beautiful and precious work, and of peculiar interest, as bringing so forcibly into evidence the power which the art of statuary may possess, of touching the heart. I have gone daily to view this fine statue, and still behold it with renewed feelings of admiration and sadness. There is a curling up of the lips, as if the languor and sickness of expiring nature had confused the sensations, and convulsed the features, and that almost suggests the idea of paleness. He has fallen, he raises himself upon his right hand, not for vengeance,—not to resume his now useless weapon,—not to appeal to the people. No; he looks not beyond himself, he feels that the wound is mortal; he raises himself for a moment on his yet powerful arm, to try his strength; but his limbs have the trailing, bending form of dying languor; he looks down upon his now useless weapon, and blood-stained shield; he is wounded, his limbs have failed, he has staggered and fallen down, and has raised himself for a moment to fall down again and die. It is a most tragical and touching representation, and no one can meditate upon it without the most melancholy feelings. Of all proofs, this is the surest of the effect produced by art. He was a slave, he had no family, no friends, he was bought with money, and trained and devoted to death. It is then all the singleness

of death and despair that you are to feel. No picture of tragic effort is presented, it is one impression, and if any artist has ever given that one impression, it is the author of the Dying Gladiator. The design is, in this sense, finer than anything in statuary I have ever seen, and given with wonderful simplicity. It is a statue, which, like those of Michael Angelo, should be placed in a vault, or darkened chamber, for the impression it makes is that of melancholy. Although not colossal, the proportions are beyond life, perhaps seven feet, and yet from its symmetry it does not appear larger than life. The forms are full, round, and manly, the visage mournful, the lip yielding to the effect of pain, the eye deepened by despair, the skin of the forehead a little wrinkled, the hair clotted in thick sharp pointed locks, as if from the sweat of fight and exhausted strength. The body large, the shoulders square, the balance well preserved by the hand on which he rests, the limbs finely rounded, a full fleshy skin covers all the body, the joints alone are slender and fine. No affectation of anatomy here, not a muscle to be distinguished, yet the general forms perfect as if they were expressed. The only anatomical feature discernible is that of full and turgid veins, yet not ostentatiously obtruded, but seen slightly along the front of the arms and ancles, giving, like the clotted hair, proof of violent exertion. The forms of the

Dying Gladiator are not ideal, or exquisite, like the Apollo; it is all nature, all feeling. In short, in this beautiful and touching production, for powerful effect and mournful expressions, the languid posture, the whole form of the bleeding and dying gladiator is executed with all the modesty of nature; never came there from the hands of the artist a truer or more pathetic representation.

This natural and melancholy picture is like a ballad chanted in its own simple melody, which makes a truer impression on the heart than the highest strain of epic song, or heroic conception of the artist.

The singular art of the artist is particularly to be discerned in the extended leg; by a less skilful hand this posture might have appeared constrained; but here, true to nature, the limbs are seen gently yielding, bending from languor, the knee sinking from weakness, and the thigh and ancle joint pushed out to support it. The gouts of blood are large and flat, hardly attracting attention, and do not spoil the figure. If the attitude had been studied, and the posture represented as an appeal to the passions, or if he had been made to die as gladiators were then taught to die,* for effect, the statue would have

* They were taught to expire in attitudes calculated to extort applause from their surly masters, lords of their fate.

The life of the vanquished gladiator, as is mentioned by Sanctonius and others,

been spoiled; had he been raised so as to look up in a beseeching attitude to the people, or to the victor, it would have been but a poor and common statue. The marble is beautiful, not too glaring, a fine cream colour, equable and pleasing. The statue is entire, with the exception of the toes of both feet, restored, it is believed, by Michael Angelo. The collar and rope are signs of his station. The gladiators were generally slaves; disobedient servants being frequently sold to the Lanistæ, whose practice it was, after instructing them in the art, to hire them out for fight. The highest reward which could be received by a gladiator was obtaining freedom, and a release from being called upon to fight in public. They were then styled the Rudiarii.

ZENO IN THE STANZA DEI FILOSOFI.—A beautiful half-draped statue, in which a character of youthful old age is finely preserved, presenting, with exquisite skill, the spare but hale body, the flowing beard, and keen piercing eye, with the simplicity and coarseness of drapery appropriate to a philosopher.

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rested on the pleasure of the spectators. If the prowess and courage displayed by him who was overcome had given satisfaction, and gained their suffrage, the thumb of each hand was held up in token of mercy, a contrary motion proclaiming condemnation and death.

CUPID AND PSYCHE.—Two beautiful small figures, exquisitely grouped. The contour, the form and limbs finely rounded, the whole expression full of nature, presenting all those fascinating, and almost indefinable graces, developed in the first burst of youthful loveliness. There are few statues, even among the finest, which have not their favourite aspect; but the composition of this piece is such, the balance and proportions so admirably preserved, that it may be viewed from every direction with undiminished effect.

THE ANTINOUS.—The fine proportions and elegant forms of this most exquisite statue are rendered still more striking from the splendour of its beautiful marble. With models such as this, and other precious remains of ancient sculpture, it seems wonderful that John of Bologna, and other great artists, should have fallen into the error of so constantly seeking to display their knowledge of anatomy; frequently injuring their finest productions, by forcing the features of that science into notice. Because the moderns, among their other philosophical discoveries, found that the human body was composed of bones, muscles, tendons, and ligaments, is the statuary called upon perpetually to remind us of this circumstance? Why was it so beautifully clothed with skin, but to hide the interior mechanism, and render the

form attractive? Anatomy is useful as a corrector, but no more. Its influence ought only to be felt; and to render it available, the artist must be well practised in general effect; like perspective, it is a good rule to assist the eye, in what a good eye could do without a guide. In the Antinous, the anatomist would look in vain to detect even the slightest mistake or misconception; yet such is the simplicity of the whole composition, so fine and undulating the forms, that a trifling error would appear as a gross fault. Every part is equally perfect; the bend of the head and declining of the neck most graceful; the shoulders manly, and large without clumsiness; the belly long and flat, yet not disfigured by leanness; the swell of the broad chest under the arm admirable, the limbs finely tapered, the ease and play of the disengaged leg wonderful, having a serpentine curve arising from an accurate observance of the gentle bendings of the knee, the half turning of the ancle, and elastic yielding natural to the relaxed state in that position from the many joints of those parts.

The distinctive and characteristic features of these four last mentioned statues afford a fine illustration of the observations I have just offered. The soft infantine beauty in the Cupid and Psyche, the nobler and grander forms of Antinous, the manly and strengthened limbs of maturer life in the Gladiator, with the slender rigidity

of age in Zeno, are all finely delineated, and totally exempt from any straining after anatomical precision. The forms are simple, pure, natural, and free from every affectation of science. I have hardly ever seen in the statues of the ancients, and certainly never in their finest works, the Antinous, the Apollo, the Gladiator, &c. a muscle caricatured. I think I can easily perceive that even the great Michael Angelo himself was not exempt from entertaining too great a fondness for a doctrine, new, as applied to statuary, and in his zeal to render it effective, we sometimes find him, in pursuit of his object, while aiming at expression, only producing coarseness. Something of this may be traced in his celebrated Mosè, in San Pietro in Vincolo. It is a noble work, and one in which the artist evidently meant to display his acquaintance with anatomy; but in searching too curiously after science, the grand general result has partly escaped him, the outline having many conspicuous defects. Nor is the general detail faultless. The right arm, full, muscular, and nervous, is fine, especially in the anatomy, and well proportioned to the size of the figure, but seems too large, contrasted with the left, which is mean, scraggy, and altogether in a different tone of composition, as also defective in the very art in which he sought to shine, having mistaken the origins of the pronator, and of the biceps. The attitude and sitting posture is well

managed, and fine; but the limbs are set rather too much at right angles, which greatly injures the grace and flow of line. In the attempt to give a heroic character to the figure, the artist has made it too colossal. The drapery also is too voluminous; and the largeness of the limbs and length of the body hardly correspond with the size of the head; while the expression of the countenance, which was meant to be grand, serious, and imposing, has a cast of fierceness, not in keeping with the repose of the quiescent posture, or characteristic mildness, imputed to the great Jewish lawgiver. The beard is fine, and beautifully flowing; but, if it might be said in speaking of the work of so great an artist, it is a little caricatured. The effect, upon the whole, is grand and imposing, and it is perhaps adventurous to have criticised so freely a work held in such high estimation; but my object is, simply to give notices of such points as, perhaps, the course of my studies may have enabled me to detect with a precision that might escape a less practised eye.

The Church of San Pietro, in Vincolo, in which the Mosè is found, is, in my mind, the finest in Rome, because presenting the most simple, yet superb, forms of architecture. One grand central nave, lined on each side with Tuscan columns of the finest fluted marble, opens upon a great semicircle, in which stands

the high altar; and here, in a spacious, noble architectural arch, this magnificent statue sits. The four figures filling up the space in the vast circle, and which were finished by one of the pupils of this great master, are all simple, well executed, and the general effect very fine.

VENUS FROM THE BATH.—A demi-colossal statue, of nearly seven feet and a half. It is extremely difficult to represent a delicate form in such gigantic proportions; but this is fine, and bears throughout a character of modesty singularly pleasing. The whole figure is feminine, simple, noble, and full of graceful bendings, the fulness of the person giving roundness to undulating forms, which in a more spare figure would have been angular. It is singular how often in the proportions of a Venus we find loveliness and richness of contour sacrificed to an exaggerated lengthy slenderness, with an unmeaning thinness of back and loins, unnatural to the female form. In the two extremes, namely, that of delicate beauty in the Venus, and supernatural power in the Hercules, how frequently does the representation of the first degenerate into simpering prettiness, while the other is swelled into monstrous forms of coarse brutal strength! The fulness and fleshiness of skin in this figure of the 'Venus from the Bath' gives a plump and ripe, although delicate, roundness to the arms, where

they rise from the back, and in the junction of the patella muscle with the arm, above the breast, as also the roundness of abdomen and groin, which I have never observed equalled in any other statue. The vase of perfumes, with the drapery thrown across, is a rich and a fine accompaniment to the general effect of this piece.

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CHAPTER TENTH.

NOTES ON ROME.

THE HOLY WEEK—THE MISERERE—EASTER SUNDAY—FIRE-WORKS OF CASTLE ST ANGELO—CHURCH OF THE ARACALI—THE PREACHER.

THE HOLY WEEK.

THE ceremonies of the Holy Week, giving at this season character to Rome, are very splendid. Yet, while contemplating the magnificence displayed in their churches, the heart involuntarily reverts, with a pleasing glow, to the memory of the simple forms of worship in our own country. There is nothing commendable in the Roman Catholic religion, but that the church is always open, a sanctuary to the afflicted. There he can lay his distracted head against a pillar, or sit upon the steps of an altar, to compose a mind ruffled with the cares of this world, or stung by its ingratitude. There the sinner may meditate upon eternity, and the blessed promise made to him "that turneth away from his wickedness,"

which speaketh peace to the contrite soul. It is pleasing to go into a solitary church in the evening hour, when the lamps on the distant altar are seen like dim stars through the red setting sun, and, in a scene of solitude and silence, like that of the desert, amidst architectural magnificence, and the gloom of the tombs of those that have passed away, soothe the over-fraught heart, and the grief that cannot speak.

There was a time, in ruder ages, when Rome saw her streets crowded with pilgrims from every distant land; when all the splendour of princely grandeur, and the influence of princely humility, were displayed; kings and emperors walking their penitential rounds, and receiving pardon and absolution.

Then was exhibited the imposing spectacle of our Saviour's entrance into the Holy City. The priests, and the Pope himself, singing hosannas, carrying palm branches, and opening the gates. Then the washing of the pilgrims' feet, placing them at table, giving them food, and dismissing them with presents, were acts of unaffected humility towards those who had traversed seas and deserts, to cast themselves before the throne of the Pope, to kiss his feet and his garment. The extinction of the torches, the singing at midnight in profound darkness, the beautiful and soul-touching music of the Miserere, while from afar, voices, imitative of the choir

of angels, were heard, rising and sinking in the distance, must then have presented a solemn and impressive scene. But the littleness of the detailed exhibition now introduced in the churches, is calculated to disturb, I had almost said to grieve, the human spirit. The history of our Saviour is most pathetic, and most touching, when left to the unadorned sublimity of scripture; but the slightest innovation in the character of grand simplicity supported throughout, sinks, instead of elevating, the homage of the heart.

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HOLY THURSDAY—THE MISERERE.

The service opens by a portion of the Lamentations of Jeremiah sung by the choristers, after which the Pope recites the pater noster in a low voice; then being seated on the throne, and crowned with the mitre, the theme is continued, sung loud and sweet by the first soprano, in a tone so long sustained, so high, so pure, so silvery and mellifluous, as to produce the most exquisite effect, in contrast with the deep choruses, answering in rich harmony at the conclusion of every strophe; and then again the lamenting voice is heard, tender and pathetic, repeating one sweet prolonged tone, sounding clear and high in the distance, till brought down again

by the chorus. The exquisite notes of the soprano almost charmed away criticism; but yet we could not help being conscious of the difficulties attending a composition of this nature, even in the hands of so great a master as Allegri, whose music it was; nor of perceiving that, after a time, the continued strain and measured answering chorus becomes monotonous, and the mind insensibly sinks into languor. Yet the whole is very fine: it is as if a being of another world were heard lamenting over a ruined city, with the responses of a dejected people, and forms a grand and mournful preparation for the Miserere.

The last light being extinguished, the chorus, in hurried sounds, proclaims that our Saviour is betrayed; then, for a moment, as a symbol of the darkness in which the moral world is left, the deepest obscurity prevails; when at the words "Christus est mortuus," the Pope, the whole body of clergy and the people, knelt, (in former times, they fell down on the earth,) and all was silent, when the solemn pause was broken by the commencing of the Miserere, in low, rich, exquisite strains, rising softly on the ear, and gently swelling into powerful sounds of seraphic harmony.

The effect produced by this music is finer and greater than that of any admired art; no painting, statue, or poem, no imagination of man, can equal its wonderful

power on the mind. The silent solemnity of the scene, the touching import of the words, " take pity on me, O God," passes through to the inmost soul, with a thrill of the deepest sensation, unconsciously moistening the eye, and paling the cheek. The music is composed of two choruses of four voices; the strain begins low and solemn, rising gradually to the clear tones of the first soprano, which at times are heard alone; at the conclusion of the verse, the second chorus joins, and then by degrees the voices fade and die away. The soft and almost imperceptible accumulation of sound, swelling in mournful tones of rich harmony, into powerful effect, and then receding, as if in the distant sky, like the lamenting song of angels and spirits, conveys, beyond all conception to those who have heard it, the idea of darkness, of desolation, and of the dreary solitude of the tomb. A solemn silence ensues, and not a breath is heard, while the inaudible prayer of the kneeling Pope continues. When he rises, slight sounds are heard, by degrees breaking on the stillness, which has a pleasing effect, restoring, as it were, the rapt mind to the existence and feelings of the present life. The effect of those slow, prolonged, varied, and truly heavenly strains, will not easily pass from the memory.

EASTER SUNDAY.

The service on Easter Sunday is grand and most imposing, insensibly raising the feelings to a true accord with the scene. There, under the superb dome built by Michael Angelo, the solemn mass is sung in deep silence, amidst the assembly of priests and princes. The morning was serene and lovely, the sun shone clear and bright through the edifice, giving to its imposing dimensions, and noble architecture, a more than usual splendour. At the end of the great cross, terminating in the grand altar, the Pope is seated, supported on either side by his cardinals and bishops, with their attendant priests, presenting a numerous and gorgeous array. The marble balustrade encircling the altar, is lined within by the guards, and spreading out at the further ends, galleries are extended, destined for royal visitors, princes, and ambassadors, on the one hand, and on the other, for strangers of all classes. The vast height of the dome, rising superbly over-head; the magnificent lower altar of fine bronze, relieved by a beautiful railing of white marble, and lighted by lamps which burn continually; the fine effect produced by the gigantic statues lessening in the distant vista, as the eye traverses along the immense space of this noble structure, form a coup-d'œil very stri-

king, and singularly fine. At the conclusion of the service, the Pope advancing to kneel at the lower altar, recited the Pater-noster, and then proceeded from the church to the balcony in front of St Peter's, to perform the benediction. The sacred character of this ceremony receives an added dignity from the fine and commanding aspect of the surrounding scenery. The approach to St Peter's is very grand, the space within the court immense, and the columns and colonnades most magnificent; while the noble and high buildings of the Vatican are seen towering on the right hand in a broad style of irregular but fine architecture. Large flat steps, ascending to the wide-spreading gates of the church, run to the whole length of the edifice, producing, from their vast extent, one of its most striking features; while over the low, square-roofed, and not unpicturesque buildings, in front of St Peter's, the eye wanders abroad to the distant prospect, to the blue hills, and far-seen glaciers, the effect being altogether solemn, and fine beyond imagination.

The ample steps of St Peter's were peopled by thousands of the peasantry, who crowded from every distant part of the Campagna, mingling with citizens of the lower ranks: those of the higher classes, forming rich and showy groups, were seen on each side, covering the fine flat-roofed colonnades. Below, on the level ground, the whole body of the Papal guards was drawn

out in array. Beyond, stood, like a deep dark phalanx, the carriages and innumerable equipages, the vivid tints of the brilliant mid-day sun giving every variety of colour, by deepened shade or added brightness. In the central balcony of the church, awaiting the approach of the Pope, were seated a rich gorgeous throng of cardinals and prelates, overlooking the countless numbers in the space below, covered without spot or interval as with one mass of living beings. Expectation prevailed throughout, till his holiness approached, when, in a moment, all was still; every eye turned from the gay and sunny scene to the dark front of St Peter's, lying deep in shade, from its massive columns; not a breath, not a sound reached the ear. The deep silence that reigned amid such a concourse was most impressive; the whole scene excited feelings of the deepest interest, as we contemplated the pale, benign, mild countenance and venerable aspect of him, who was now bending forward with anxious zeal to bless the surrounding multitude. The rich deep-toned bell of St Peter's announced the conclusion of the benediction—solemn sounds, which were instantly answered by the loud pealing cannon of Castle St Angelo, as likewise by the voices of the musicians, and clamorous rejoicings of the people.

When night approaches, and the dome of this magnificent temple is hung with lights, all the grandeur of its

architecture is displayed. Each frieze and cornice, arch, and gate, and pillar, is enriched with lines of splendid fires, and every steeple, tower, and bulky dome, glittering with light, seems to hang in a firmament of its own, high in the clear dark sky. The long sweeping colonnade forms, as it were, a golden circle, enclosing the dark mass of people below, filling the spacious basin of the court, while the waters of the superb fountains, sparkling in the partial gleams of light, are heard dashing amid the hum and murmur of the busy throng; when suddenly, in an instant, the form is changed, the red distinct stars are involved in one blaze of splendid flame, as if the vast machine were turned by the hand of some master spirit.

From this object, the spectator is next hurried to view the splendid fire-works of Castle St Angelo, esteemed the finest in the world, and which, for general aspect and effect, are perhaps unequalled. All at first was dark, the deep dense mass of the populace filled the squares and streets, while the carriages, each with its lights reflected from the dark flood of the Tyber, swung slowly and heavily across the bridge. No place or city affords so magnificent a scene, for exhibiting the alternate effects of brilliant illumination and sudden darkness, of utter silence and overwhelming sounds. The vast round tower of the castle rises over the scene,

with its bulky cornice and flanking bastions; the bridge, of fine and level form, leads direct to the gate; while the statue of St Michael, big and black, with broad expanded wings, hangs over the tower, and the Tyber, walled in with an amphitheatre of antique houses on the farther shore, sweeps round the castle in deep and eddying pools; and in the distance, as if hung in the air, the vast dome of St Peter's is seen from afar, striped and adorned with its many thousand lamps, and crowned with rich circles of fire.

All is dark and silent, when the first gun from St Angelo booms along the river, and shakes the ground. Again a stiller silence prevails, when vast flames burst from the centre of the circular tower with an explosion truly magnificent, filling the air with various-coloured fires, which shoot upwards and athwart, with hurried and impetuous motion, involving the whole fabric in clouds and darkness; then all at once, within the dark clouds, appears, in pale and silvery light, the structure, long spread out with glittering columns, frieze, and cornice. The river, gate, and bridge, involved meanwhile in redder fires, when again all is dark and silent. After each pause the guns announce new explosions, while the sound rolls through the city, emptied of its inhabitants, and solitary as the surrounding hills, which again reverberate the sound.

Nor can anything, perhaps, be more striking than the revulsion of feelings caused by the sudden cessation of sound; the change from the most dazzling, and almost fearful light, to utter darkness; from sounds the most astounding to perfect stillness. At the last tremendous explosion, the whole edifice was enveloped in a rush of fire, while the broad brooding statue of St Michael on its pinnacle, hung black and ominous, apparently suspended in the air, and floating on a vast mass of flame. Then again all was still, and deep obscurity prevailed. The moonlight shone faint upon the distant landscape, and the river reflected the solitary and sullen lamps in a degree to give darkness effect, and show imperfectly the forms of the bridge, and the mass of the slow-retiring crowd. During this wonderful exhibition, altogether peculiar to this city, and not unworthy of the occasion, no confusion, no bustle ensued, no noise or clamour; each individual, satisfied with the wonders he had seen, returned quietly to his own abode. This splendid display closes, as with one flash of magnificence, the ceremonies of the Holy Week, and the stranger retiring slowly from the scene, feels as if he had witnessed, not the trivial show of an hour, but some signal phenomenon in the natural world.

CHURCH OF THE ARACALI—THE PREACHER.

Among many churches which I visited on Christmas eve, I chanced, at a late hour in the night, to enter the grand and ancient edifice of the Aracali. Perfect stillness prevailed, and all was dark, except the great altar. There, thousands of wax tapers burnt bright and vivid, sending forth a flood of light which poured along the great nave, and athwart the massive columns, shooting into the deep obscurity, which seemed more profound as the distant objects receded from its last rays. Before the altar were numerous figures, kneeling in silent prayer, composed almost exclusively of old and sickly-looking females of the poorest and most wretched classes of Rome, their pale and haggard countenances but too forcibly bespeaking the extreme of poverty. The light beaming across, touched with partial gleams their lowly bending forms, now enveloped in a deeper shade, now displayed with more vivid glare as it played around the sunken cheek and thinned hair, growing scanty on the cold uncovered head, the shrivelled hands meekly folded, or the glistening eye raised in fervour to heaven. The whole effect of this scene was singularly picturesque and touching; the brightly illuminated altar, shining with redoubled power in the midst of profound dark-

ness; the stillness that reigned throughout, the silent meditation of these lonely women, seemed like life and hope awaiting the opening dawn of moral light.

Although I had been much struck with the noble aspect of this ancient church, and altogether impressed by the recollections left on my mind at my first entrance within its venerable walls, I did not again revisit the Aracali till at a much later period, when, passing along the Piazzo di Campidoglio, my attention was accidentally attracted by perceiving a number of people assembled at the gates of the church, some of whom, seemingly, were loitering and stationary, while the greater portion passed in. In the season of Lent, it is very usual among the priests and brothers of the monastic orders to pronounce discourses in the different churches, which being always poured forth at the inspiration of the moment, and delivered with that powerful energy so peculiarly characterizing the manner of the Improvvisatore, may not improperly be classed as appertaining to this style of composition. In the belief that an occasion was perhaps now offered me of indulging a desire I had long entertained of hearing such a discourse, I went in and found my conjectures well founded. A sandal-footed, bare-armed, unclothed-looking monk, young, with a pale visage and negligent aspect, stood leaning against a pillar at the upper end of the middle nave; his grey

coarse habit, girded by various folds of thickly knotted cords, seemed scarcely to cover his person; his almost naked arms hanging down by his side, while his cowl, which had fallen back, discovered a wild pallid countenance, and a long, lean, bony throat. He stood silent and motionless, like an image or statue, as if lost in meditation, or exhausted by the vehemence of his own overwrought feelings poured out upon his auditors. These were composed of various classes, but more especially of such as are daily seen, forming little groups in every quarter of Rome; thin slight-made figures, their cloaks, with an effect not unpicturesque, carelessly thrown over one shoulder, playing at the game of Mora; beings, whose means of existence seem as inexplicable as their mode of life. The orator had evidently reached to an elevated strain before my entrance, leaving, as he had suddenly paused, vivid traces of the force of his arguments on the countenances of those he addressed. Among these might be seen the varied effect of his eloquence. Here the spread hands, the half-opened mouth, the strained eye, spoke an earnest, yet amazed attention, while perhaps near him stood, with silvered hair and meek aspect, the pale anchorite, trembling, while he listened, lest perchance even he might not be secure against the punishments of the evil doer. While beyond him might be seen the dark, gloomy, steady gaze of the brooding

fanatic, whose flashing eye seemed to kindle with the orator, and keep pace with his denunciations—perhaps contrasted by the quiet, unthinking air of contented stupidity, looking as if the sense of hearing alone were roused, or by the speaking eye, beaming with zealous fire, as if ready to challenge or answer each new proposition. Some stood with downcast looks, serious and reflecting,—others walked softly along, now seen, now lost among the pillars; while the larger portion, who had been as it were surprised by their emotion into a momentary taciturnity, were hastily forming into groups, and beginning, in whispered accents, to converse with that eagerness and vivacity which so peculiarly characterize their nation. But soon, above these murmuring sounds, the full, deep-toned voice of the preacher struck the ear, when suddenly all was again hushed to silence. Slow and solemn he opened his discourse; but, as he proceeded, his features became gradually more animated; his dark, deep, eloquent eye kindling as he spoke, and throwing momentary radiance over his wan and haggard countenance, while the round mellow tones of the Italian language gave the finest energy to his expressions. With frequent pauses, but with increasing power, he continued his discourse; his voice now low and solemn, now grand and forcible, but still with moderated and ever varied accents, which worked on the feelings, at one moment producing the chill of strong emotion, and

then, as he changed his tone, melting the heart to tenderness. The object of his sermon and self-imposed mission, was to gain votaries, and win them to a monastic life, by pourtraying the dangers, the turbulence, and the sorrows of the worldly, (i Mondani,) contrasted with the peaceful serenity of the heaven-devoted mind. Occasionally, as if warmed by a prophetic spirit, with an air now imploring and plaintive, now wild and triumphant, with animated gesture, and tossing of the arms, alternately pointing to heaven, and to the shades below, he seemed as if he would seduce, persuade, or tear his victim from the world. The powers of his voice and action gave an indescribable force to his language, carrying away the minds of his auditors with a rapidity that left no pause for reflection. The sombre chastened light of day bringing forward some objects in strong relief, and leaving others in shade, the peculiar aspect of the monk, the magic influence which seemed to hang on his words, and lend force to his eloquence, gave to the whole scene a character at once singular and striking.

The effect produced on the mind by music is various in its degree, and often most powerful; if, then, the tones of an instrument so much move us, can the organs of speech be without effect? The inflections of voice, possessed by an Italian, must act forcibly, although perhaps insensibly, on the nervous system, and to this influence, no small portion of the charm of the Improvvisatore

may be ascribed. The construction of the language is also singularly propitious to this style of composition; not only as possessing in itself a power so singular over the affections and sensibilities of the heart, but as being indued with characteristic properties, which increase the wonderful rapidity by which the most striking and changing imagery is suddenly presented to the mind, while accents so sweet and flexible easily fall into numbers, giving a grandeur to the strains at once pleasing and impressive. To form a learned and accomplished Improvvisatore, long study and training we know to be necessary; but the first principles and foundation on which to establish his acquirements must be found in natural propensity; and, as I have already noticed, this is undoubtedly possessed in a peculiar manner in this country.

I witnessed one morning on my journey a trifling, yet not uninteresting proof, of this faculty natural to the Italian. While we were passing the mid-day hour of repose in a small inn, other travellers, as they successively chanced to arrive, were all shown into the same apartment with us. Among them entered a woman and her son, a boy of eleven or twelve years of age. A lady, whose deep mourning and pale countenance spoke her to be in affliction, made one of the previous guests. On her, as if influenced by some charm, the youth's eye instantly fell, and hastily, but yet not ungracefully, step-

ping forward, he addressed her in a measured cadence of great elegance. The suddenness of the action, and the deep pathos of his tones, produced a general surprise and admiration; and having offered this little tribute to feeling, he quietly retired, resuming the simplicity of his natural manner, which for the moment had given way to the animation appropriate to the Improvvisatore. The peculiar temperament and distinctive national characteristic of the Italian, are likewise in alliance with this mode of composition; the vivacity, the ardour, the passionate feelings that animate and impel them to sudden bursts of excitation and enthusiasm, being most propitious to its production. We may at the same time observe, how much peculiar habit, prevailing in different parts of Italy, directs these feelings. We have seen the sculptor or painter in Florence followed with an extravagance of admiration, which in our colder clime would seem delirium, a whole street bearing a name in memory of the rejoicings occasioned by the success of a painter, and the contention between rival artists becoming a national concern.

THE END.

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